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Raising Slaves in Another World While on a Journey - WN Chapter 01-20

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Chapter 1

Infinite Dungeon Online, also known as <<IDO>>, is a VRMMO featuring dungeons that are never the same, thousands of monsters, and more content is added to it continuously.

Released one week ago, it gained popularity in the blink of an eye, and now more than 10,000 people are logged into the game.

Today I, Miyamoto Mai, finally decided to participate in that game.

「Login」

Suddenly I am surrounded by the dark. There is no one but me and my alter-ego who is currently dressed only in underwear.

In short, this place is a character customization space.

「This isn't good either...」

I don't know how many times I tried, and I'm discouraged.

「After all, the simple names are already taken」

I think about what to do while looking at the blank input field.

My naming sense is catastrophic. I have come up with like all the simple names, but they are all already in use. As expected of a game with more than 10,000 players.

「Though I feel embarrassed, there is no other way than to use that name.」

I reluctantly enter the name.

Nobody seems to have used this name, and somehow I was finally able to progress.

[Maika], that is the name of my character.

In the past I used this name in another VRMMO I played. For some reason it became too famous, and I was reluctant to use it, but there's no helping it any more.

I move to the column for class selection, and select the samurai class, as I had decided to choose it beforehand.

By the way, the samurai is a considerably unpopular class.

Since this game is basically made to be played in a party, once you run out of HP you are forcibly sent to town, and furthermore, a death penalty exists. Therefore, what is considered mainstream is to have a vanguard with high HP and defense to protect the high damage magician and priest type classes. The HP and defense of a Samurai are considerably low, but on the other hand, its attack speed and damage are quite high. Present conditions to capture a dungeon are relatively difficult, and in addition, players can't progress due to the high level of the monsters. That's why there's almost no one playing a samurai which is hard to party up with. Of course, I intend to play solo so this is irrelevant to me anyway. Besides, I think samurai are somewhat cool.

「Well, next is the skill selection」

After the class selection is over, skill selection comes next. In <<IDO>> they also have an extensive range of skills, and there are nearly 200 skills to choose from. Each skill is set to a certain point, and at the time of creating a character you can put up to 30 skill points in, and can choose up to 7 skills. In fact, the points can be used past 30 while making the character, but you will start with negative skill points. (ED: makes more sense that you start with negative skill points if you used more than 30 in character creation) If this happens, even if I choose the skill, it won't be usable at first but I can get more skill points by levelling up. The other way to get skills is to get one from the treasure chest in the dungeon. Therefore, most people save up their skill points since they can't beat the dungeons.

In my case, I will pick the skills I decided on last week.

First of all [Dual Wielding](5). This can't be removed. Dual wielding is cool. Aim for Miyamoto Musashi.

Dual wielding is only available to the samurai or thief classes.

By the way, dual wielding isn't popular.

This is because the current way of thinking is to fight with a sword and shield rather than two swords.

Next is [Action Limit Release](14). In short, upon using the skill I can double jump or wall run.

The third is [Abandonment](3), a skill that allows me to predict an attack and avoid it. This skill isn't popular either.

The fourth is [Katana](4). This is so I can use the basic samurai skills.

The fifth is [Coercion](7), a skill that immobilizes the enemy's movements.

The sixth is [Grapple](7). This game is unlike others. For example, if a swordsman hits you with his fists he won't do any damage. This skill is to make it possible. Of course, it's also not popular. I mean, classes that use fists as a weapon aren't popular.

The seventh is [Detection](2). This is required to explore the dungeon. There is the possibility of dying in a trap if there are no players with the Detection skill. It will also react to monsters, so it's very useful.

「But when I look at this again...」

Unpopular skills occupy half of the skills wonderfully.
Moreover, a start with skill points equalling -12.

Well, because I think this is set up just for me, I won't regret it.
I notice that there are still three blank skill fields even though I've already selected 7 skills.

Is this a bug?

Well, even if these 3 skills slots are bugged, there are no hands to stop me from using them.

That being the case, the skills that caught my attention [Growth](50), [Automatic Recovery](30), and [Abnormal State Immunity](15) are all chosen. [Growth] is a skill that increases the speed of levelling. [Automatic Recovery] is a skill that recover HP automatically. [Abnormal State Immunity] is something I took because it would be troublesome to cure abnormal states with items during a battle.
Still, were such skills like that until a while ago?

「Well, finally it's the last step」

The last step is to change the appearance of the character. It's only the hairstyle and hair color that can be changed however.

Changing the figure of the body was prohibited, since the movements of the body would become strange.

I wanted to change this shabby figure, but there's no helping it.

I meekly cut the hair. I wanted to have this style in real life but I couldn't. After cutting the hair, I then changed the hair color from black to silver.

「Good work. All choices have been selected」

When I finish the last touches, a voice flows from somewhere.

It isn't a mechanical voice, it's the voice of a person.

「You will now be transferred to the world of Infinite Dungeon. I pray for your success」

Along with those words, a light surrounds me, and I feel myself being pulled from the side at the same time.

「What the hell is this...」

My eyes close after that light.

Soon after the light settled, I hear a noise nearby, and little by little I open my eyes.

「Hee...」

I voice my admiration instinctively from the sight of the spectacle before me. People in knight armor and people dressed in expensive clothes are around me. A king-like old man with a crown stands before my eyes.

Next to me are 3 high school boys.

This looks almost like a summoning to a different world I've read about in light novels.

Moreover, this situation looks like a hero summoning, and it seems I'm an irregular.

While the 3 boys are in high school clothes, I'm in an <<IDO>> beginner set with 2 swords.

「I'm sorry for suddenly calling you, but I want you to listen calmly. My name is Graham Dragnolia. King of this Dragnolia Kingdom」

The king began with his speech.

Since it was too long here are the key points.

1. In this world, every 1000 years a dungeon starts to overflow with monsters.
2. Three people, not including me, were summoned to this world as heroes.
3. I was summoned here as an irregular, but I'm treated as a hero as I was summoned with them.
4. A summoned hero has some kind of special ability, but I don't know what it is.
5. A Demon Lord has appeared.
6. The king wants us to save this world.

That kind of a feeling. Judging from the explanation from the King, this is probably <<IDO>> after 1000 years. I have no evidence though.

"I ask of you, please save this world"

The King lowers his head and asks. The 3 people beside me seem to be enthusiastic.

I refuse the King's request. Being a hero is troublesome.

「Is that so, it's regrettable but there's no helping it. I'm sorry for involving you. I cannot return you to your original world, but I can give you funds on which you can live in this world.」

There are already 3 heroes so you don't need an extra, me. A letter of recommendation and some money are handed to me by the King who never seems to be disappointed, and with a business like attitude I was thrown out of the castle.

So, what should I do now?

Chapter 2

That reminds me, can I look at my status?

On my way out of the castle, and while I was walking towards the adventurer's guild, I suddenly became concerned about my status and opened my status screen.

Name: Maika Lv1000

MP: 1000

STR: 1000

VIT: 1000

AGI: 1000

INT: 1000

DEX: 1000

[Skills] Dual Wielding Lv100

Detection Lv100

Katana Lv100

Action Limit Release Lv100

Grapple Lv100

Coercion Lv100

Abandonment Lv100

Automatic Recovery Lv100

Abnormal State Immunity Lv100

Growth Lv100

What is this cheat, am I crazy?

I tear my hair out unintentionally.

It's good that I lost almost no HP when pulling my hair out. In the game, if you were stabbed in the heart, as long as you had a little bit of HP left it was still possible to survive. Since this world isn't a game, it probably means that I would die instead.

For me, who wanted a life-or-death fight, I would be happy.

However, without doing anything I became Lv 1000. What is with this stupid status.

Win or lose, a last-minute battle was what I was looking forward to, but it seems I can't enjoy it here.

I close the status screen in low spirits.

What am I going to do? For the time being, let's register at the adventurer's guild. Even a life as an adventurer seems boring now. I at least wanted an ordinary life...

I walk down the street while thinking such things, and I happen to hear the word "slave" from somewhere. I've got an idea.

Let's buy a slave.

A classic of the fantasy world, slaves. I will raise a slave and make it strong. At least this way I can kill some time.

Fortunately I have the money I got from the King. Let's use it all at once.

「Welcome young lady」

An old man with a cane welcomed me into the store.

His face looks so wrinkled that he could die at any moment, but his eyes are sharp, and an average person wouldn't be able to help but fear him. I may have to fight a little.

「I'd like to buy a slave with this」

After saying so, I hand him a large bag filled with the money I received from the King.

I phrase it like this, not because I'm scared of this Ojii-san, but because I hardly talk to people, and when I'm not used to someone my words end up like this.

「What kind of slave are you looking for?」

What to do, adult men are too difficult to handle, but a woman of the same age would probably be difficult to handle as well.

A younger girl or boy would do, but because I only know how to take care of myself, let's make it a girl.

「Of course, please wait a moment in this room」

That being said, I wait for a few minutes, and the merchant Ojii-san returns with two girls that look around 12 years old.

According to him, they are elven twins.

Tension rose between the elves.

The one currently staring at me, with long golden hair, is Sara. Hiding behind her is the nervous younger sister, Mira. Both elven twins are good-looking. Very different from my ordinary face.

「What do you think? Do they look good to you?」

「I'll buy them」

I answer Ojii-san. I had already decided to buy these twins the moment I saw them.

I sign the documents, and finish a contract of master and slave.

At that time, a tattoo was put on the back of my hand, and it was quite painful.

When the master and slave contract is finished, the master can look at the slave's status.

It's surprising that the concept of status is in this world.

Immediately, I take a look at the statuses of the twins.

Sara Lv3 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Fire> Lv2
- Magic <Wind> Lv2
- Magic <Water> Lv1

Mira Lv1 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Light> Lv1
- Cooking Lv1

It's quite different from my status.

This is probably a common status screen for this world.

Then, is there a chance that this is the future world of IDO?

Well, it doesn't matter.

By the way, what is talent?

「Talent?」

「Talent ranges from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest. Having a higher rank means you will become even stronger when you level up. It also allows you to learn more skills.」

Merchant Ojii-san starts to explain, after the word leaked from my mouth. Judging from the description by Ojii-san, these two may become quite strong in the future.

It may have been a good buy.

「We look forward to your next visit」

I receive change from Ojii-san, and leave the shop, taking the two slaves with me.

Okay, now what to do. The price of the slaves was higher than I expected, and I hardly have any money left.

I don't know the prices of this world yet, but this is probably enough to stay at an inn.

My bad habit of not thinking about the consequences has appeared.

Let's be careful, if possible, from now on.

...Although I'm always thinking so, I never learn.

Now, let's go to the adventurer's guild like I had originally planned.

By the way, can you register slaves at the guild?

Well, we'll see how it goes.

Chapter 3

「I'm sorry, slaves are considered to be property and thus are unable to register at the guild」

「Un, understood」

I am currently accompanied by two people at the adventurer's guild. I asked whether it was possible to register them as adventurers, but apparently slaves can't register.

For a while now I've been able to feel the gazes of the people around me, so much so that it hurts.

Well, at first glance, you see a timid woman with two young elf slaves trying to register as an adventurer, so of course you would be interested.

I don't like being observed though, so I slightly release [Coercion] around me. Amongst the voices 「Hou, this fellow is quite interesting」 can be heard, but I ignore those remarks. It's not worth involving myself with them.

「Then, only myself」

For the time being, I register myself at the guild. I have the recommendation letter from the King, but it would be troublesome if I showed it off, so I don't hand it over.

「Then please, fill in your name and age」

On the paper I got, I write my nickname, Maika, and my age, 17.

「Maika-san is it? Please wait a moment」

The Reception Onee-san gets a paper, and on that paper she sets a black slate. When she does it, the slate sinks into the paper, and a black card emerges. Amazing. After all, fantasy like this is impressive to see.

「This is your guild card Maika-san」

Maika Age:17

Rank: 1

「A guild card is the only way for people to see your information. When the

owner of the card touches the center of it, the owner's possessed skills and money that is stored at the guild will be shown. When shopping, you can pay using this card, but please don't lose it because it is used as identification as well.」

Hee, this card is quite high-tech.

I thought that such a high-tech guild card would only exist in novels.

Just like that, Onee-san starts to explain how the guild works.

It took a long time, so here are the main points:

1. There is a ranking system, with 1 being the lowest, and 10 the highest.
2. You can receive requests only 1 rank below or above your current rank. It seems sometimes a nomination request becomes available.
3. A certain amount of points are set for requests, and there's an examination once you get enough points to rank up.
4. If you cancel the request you took, you must pay a cancellation fee of 5 times the reward.
5. Material obtained from monsters other than the specified request are not able to be bought by the adventurer's guild. You must sell them to the merchant's guild.
6. Dungeons have a set rank. Adventurers with a lower rank than the dungeon, can't enter (this however does not apply to recently discovered dungeons).
7. You can't take the dungeon cores from dungeons up to rank 3 since they are designated by the guild to be for beginner adventurers (If there are too many dungeons, they seem to put in a request for a core).
8. The guild does not interfere with conflicts between adventurers.

It's such a place.

After hearing about the guild, I decided to receive a request right away.

I go to the bulletin board, and as expected there are a lot of adventurers in this castle town. All of them seem to be at the bulletin board as well. Since I am bad with people, I quickly step up to the board, peel a request off, and go to the reception desk.

To be honest, the contents of the requests seem to be easy so I took a few at once.

The requests I selected are
– Yakusousaishi: rank1 (ヤクソウサイシ)
Reward: 50 Gill for 10 pieces
– 5 Pieces of Boar's Meat: rank2
Reward: 250 Gill
– 5 Boar Fangs: rank2
Reward: 250 Gill

It's these 3. It's difficult to read when there's no kanji or hiragana though.
When I submitted my requests, the reception Onee-san looked a little disappointed.
It seems it's rare for a novice to suddenly take on 3 requests.

「Ano」

When we left the guild, I was called out to by Sara.
By the way, this is the first conversation we'll have. I'm thankful that the other side initiated it though, because I don't know what to talk about.
However, she speaks in a very frightened voice.
I wonder if I did something that made them scared?

「Are we going on the request too?」

「That's right」

「It's a fight isn't it?」

「Of course」

Just what is this child talking about. I received a request to get materials from the monsters, so of course there's going to be a fight.

「My little sister is...」

I remembered that Sara's level was higher than Mira's.
Judging from that, it seems Mira has never experienced a battle.

「It's okay, I will support you」

I paid a large amount of money, I'm not going to let them die immediately.

I will let them act reckless, but I will prevent them from getting injured. That's what I explained to Sara with a smile on my face, and in reply Sara nodded desperately.

That reminds me, at first 「That child」 also showed a similar reaction. Perhaps my smiling face looks strange?

Chapter 4

We left the Imperial capital and headed over to the neighboring grassy plains. In this area where adventurers complete low ranking requests, there are a lot of people.

Because it was difficult to hunt with so many people around, I just collected some herbs and continued another 2 kilometers in.

As expected, there are fewer people here because it's far from the Imperial Capital.

As we keep walking, although me and Sara are okay, Mira is out of breath, so I decided to take a break.

Because I didn't have enough money, we're out of food.

「Nee, how did you two become slaves?」

I talked with the twins because just sitting there and doing nothing was boring. Communication is going to be important from now on because we will be acting together.

It's been a long time since I talked with someone, so I'm a little tense though.

「Ano, do I have to talk about that?」

「I want to hear it」

It looks like it's a difficult topic for Sara.

I can't come up with any other topics to talk about though. Sara began talking little by little after I asked again in a slightly harder tone with my neck going *potsuri potsuri*(ポツリポツリ).

Still, when I first met Sara she was glaring at me, and it was definitely a rebellious attitude, but now she's submissive. What happened?

The younger sister, Mira, won't even look me in the eyes. It's a mystery.

「Our family had to travel on business. This time our destination was the Imperial Capital. We were attacked by the thieves hiding in the woods along the way though, and mother and father became bait to let us escape...」

Though the two escaped, they were soon captured and sold to a slave dealer. Sara couldn't finish the story, but something like that must have happened.

This happens quite often in fantasy stories, so I'm not surprised.

Still, I can't cheer them up with something like "such things often happen in novels and manga." In the first place, it's impossible for me to comfort someone anyway.

I'm somewhat happy that I had this conversation though.

Initially, I bought the twins so I could kill some time, but I'm getting attached. Was it a mistake to purchase the twins?

「It's time to go」

After a short time, the break is over. I use [Detection], and look for a boar. I find one to the south-east about 500 meters from here, but I can see 3 people near it, so it's probably their prey.

Afterwards, I find a herd of 10 boars 800 meters west from here, and there aren't any people nearby. There's quite a number of them, but it's okay since I'm here. Mm, this will do.

「Follow me」

After a few minutes, we have reached the boars. The herd is absorbed in eating grass, so they haven't noticed us yet.

「Ano, aren't there too many?」

Although the monster is herbivorous, it's over 1 meter in length, and there are 10 of them. These monsters are scary to the twins.

「Wait here」

I told the scared children to wait, and I jumped in alone. Fast – the distance between me and the boars quickly shrinks.

The first one has his head cut off. At that time, an unexpected thing occurred. Under the impact of the slash, the ground cracks, and 6 more boars are caught up in the shockwave and die.

I'm at a loss for words. I'm stronger than I had imagined. It may be a bad thing if I don't learn how to control this power.

Inevitably, the sword was cracked by the impact, and I had to crack the heads

of 2 boars with my bare hands.

It feels bad to kill these creatures bare handed though, and I don't want to do it again if possible.

I need to learn how to control this power quickly.

「This, kill it」

I throw one of the remaining boars between the twins.

The boar was thrown into the air, and since it crashed into the ground head first, it was stunned.

Though it's an ideal chance to kill it, the twins tremble with watery eyes and don't move.

Sara's level is 3, so she had to have fought with monsters before. What are you doing?

「Kill」

Sara finally began to move again after I spoke.

She extends her hand towards the boar and closes her eyes.

「F-flame」

At her words, a column of flame rises from the magical square that had appeared under the boar.

「Oh~」

I unconsciously voice my admiration. This isn't the first time I've seen magic, as I saw enough in VR, but that is different from this realistic magic after all.

Looking at it, I want to try it out as well. It's too late to regret it now though. If I knew this would happen, I would have put a skill point into magic.

Afterwards, I take a look at the reference book about monsters, that I received for free at the adventurer's guild, as well as the katana I broke, Sara's sword, and Mira's knife.

To work with someone again after so long is nostalgic. Were we able to get closer after our last conversation I wonder?

Because I forgot to bring a material bag, I put the times in my item box. It's good that an item box is usable.

Mira and Sara look at me in surprise. I explain that this is my magic, and the twins look convinced.

However, this item box stands out too much, so let's take bags with us next time.

If this is like in the novels, a space bag should be sold. (Ed: I assume by space bag the author means something along the lines of a dimensional bag which can usually hold an infinite number of things. Not the bag that shrinks when you suck the air out.)

One the way back, Mira and Sara are walking next to me. Both of them have started to talk to me a little bit more.

Walking together like this, it reminds me of 《・・・》, my little sister.

... What's this? That's strange, 《・・・》 was my little sister? ...

Yep, I had one. Certainly there should be a little sister, but I can't remember her face or voice. By the way, I remember that I was talking about 「That child」 before. Who is she?—

——— When we are walking together like this, I become nostalgic and remember when I was walking with 「That child」.

We will be together for a while, so I want to become friends with them.

That said, I think I heard a noise, or was it just my imagination?

Well, let's leave it at that. It has been following us for some time. At first I thought it was a person returning to the Imperial Capital, but it seems that's not the case. There seems to be 3 people up ahead. It's probably the friends of the thing following us.

「Young ladies, would you like to form a party with us?」

The largest man says with a large grin on his face.

「Unnecessary」

「Maa Maa, don't say that」(まあまあ)

I decline and try to go around them. However, a hand is placed on my shoulder. I want to slice his hand off with my katana, but the twins would get dirty from the blood, so I bear it.

「These two slaves are really cute」

A man in the back says ... and he touches Sara's shoulder – the left arm of the

man flies in the air.

The blood pours out from the man's shoulder and falls on Sara.

I made a mess, I'm sorry.

While the men are distracted, I use [Coercion] at full power.

The men start to tremble and cry. The man who had his arm cut off died from shock.

Did you know though?

I don't know why, but I hate people that try to hurt things that belong to me without my permission.

If you wanted to mess with me, I will be patient, but this is not okay.

You guys had malicious intentions towards my things.

I won't forgive you for that.

This isn't Japan, and unlike the me from over there, I am not powerless in this world. Besides, they are adventurers. I don't need to hold back.

These are people who can only do harm anyway. They will die here.

「Don't...」

I stop the sword I had raised as a shivering Mira grabs onto my clothes.

Seeing her so frightened, I snap out of it, and my senses start to come back.

Though I was finally able to make friends, I made them afraid of me again.

Even though I bought them, I got attached and I don't want to be hated again.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath... Un, I calmed down.

「Sorry」

I lower my head and apologize to the twins.

「No, no, please don't apologize. Thank you for getting angry for our sake」

「Thank you very much」

The twins lower their heads.

Dangerous, these girls are too nice.

I'm sorry, I only thought about killing time.

I will absolutely protect these two. Since I'm already so attached, I would be really sad if I lost them. So I thought ... I don't want to feel like that again...

Are(あれ)? Why did I think such a thing?

Maa(まあ), nevermind.

「Let's returns for now. Sara needs a wash」

The twins firmly hold my hands along the way.

It's been a long time since I've felt the warmth of someone's hand.

Side Story

Mira's Perspective

「Leave this to us, you girls run away!」

「Please, you must live for our sake!」

While being pulled by Onee-chan, I look back at mother and father who are surrounded by a lot of people.

I wanted to help them. I didn't want to be separated from mother and father. I despised the thieves that attacked us.

I didn't have any power to help though. I hate myself for being powerless.

I want to be stronger.

I want the power to protect.

I also want a strong heart like Onee-chan, who pulled me away.

「Wake up」

I wake up behind prison bars.

While we were running through the woods, we were caught by a slave dealer Ojii-san. I haven't been able to sleep peacefully since I was put here.

I can hear feelings full of emotion. This isn't a skill. It's a natural ability I was born with.

When someone is angry, sad, happy or when someone is hateful, I can hear those strong emotions and feelings.

It's noisy, but I can't do anything about it. I can hear the sorrowful feelings from the slaves, and the joyous feelings from the people in charge. I feel like my head it going to burst.

Today's person in charge is rare. It's the owner, the Ojii-san who caught us.

I can hardly hear this person's feelings, but today Ojii-san's heart is overjoyed.

The only time I can hear this Ojii-san's feelings, is when slaves are sold.

「The buyer of you twins has been decided. Come」

I thought so.

Frankly, I'm really scared, but there's nothing I can do.

A slave can't choose her master.

If you were bought by a bad master, you either work until you died or became a sex slave. In the worst case, you will be used as a meat shield.

However, I can only pray. Pray that the person who bought us is nice.

I don't know if my wishful thinking is enough though.

I'm shielded by Onee-chan while going to see the person who will become our master.

It's a beautiful silver-haired girl that looks like a doll. There's a weird sword hanging at her waist.

Is she an adventurer I wonder?

Getting the slave tattoo hurt a little, but the contract was made without any issues. We are now heading towards the adventurer's guild.

So far there's been no conversation.

「Mira, how?」

「I don't know」

I whisper to Onee-chan that I can't hear our master's feelings at all.

Maybe this person, just like the slave dealer, shows only a handful of emotions to people.

Because I have always depended on my ability, I'm scared of people I can't hear the feelings of.

We have arrived at the adventurer's guild. We are probably here to receive a request. Can we also go in?

There are a lot of people. It's really loud, but there's no relief.

Onee-chan covers my ears.

I've told her that there's no meaning to covering my ears, but Onee-chan knows that I suffer when there are a lot of people around.

Onee-chan is really kind, but a little obaka-san. (Ed: I assume she's trying to say that her big sis is really kind, but a bit stupid. I'm not fluent in Japanese so I can't tell you why the o is there, but I think it's a formal thing)

And then...

「――tsu!？」(っっ)

I want to scream out from the bottom of my heart.

A great amount of pressure is leaking from Master.

In my heart, I can hear feelings of fear mixed with delight all around.

I can also hear a lot of fear coming from Onee-chan.
Her face turns blue, and she starts trembling.

Of course, I was also afraid of this pressure.
However, even though my master has released this much pressure, I still can't hear her feelings at all. I'm more afraid of that.
By the way, the reception Onee-san was happy about this pressure. I wonder if this Onee-san is a pervert.

After Master heard the explanation about the guild, she started looking for a request.

I was also listening, but I couldn't understand half of it. I think that the Onee-san's explanation was poor.

「Ano」

When we left the guild, Onee-chan called out to Master.
Her voice is trembling, but do your best Onee-chan!

「Are we going on the request too?」

「That's right」

「It's a fight isn't it?」

「Of course」

「My little sister is...」

「It's okay, I will support you」

When Master says that, her mouth twists. I think she's smiling, but her eyes aren't smiling at all. It's scary.

Onee-chan hangs her head with tears in her eyes.

Onee-chan tried her best to hold it in, but snot still came out.

We left the Imperial Capital to find herbs, but Master quickly found them and left the fields.

It looks like next we're going to be hunting some monsters resembling boars.
It was my first time hunting, so I'm a little nervous.

How far have we traveled I wonder?

Master told us to stop and take a break. I wonder if she's being considerate of me? I don't know.

During the break, Master told us that she wanted to hear our story. If possible, I didn't want to talk about it, but I can't defy our Master. I don't know what kind of contract Master made, but normally if you violate the signed Master-Slave contract, the heart breaks due to the tattoo and the slave dies. Scary.

I became sad when Onee-chan started crying while telling the story. When she finished, Master comforted us. I still couldn't hear Master's feelings though. It seems that Onee-chan got a little used to Master, but I'm still scared.

The break ends, and while walking it seems Master has found a herd of boars. There's more than I expected, and I'm nervous.

「Wait here」

After I heard Master's voice, she was already in front of the herd of boars. The ground broke when Master swung her sword down, and the boars blew away. After Master's sword breaks, the remaining boars have their heads crushed by her hands.

Master is really strong. While I was travelling as a merchant, I saw a lot of adventurers, but Master is stronger than all of them. Before her overwhelming power, naturally my body trembles with fear. Onee-chan is genuinely scared.

「This, kill it」

Master throws the remaining boar. We weren't able to move at all though.

「Kill」

Master talks again, and this time Onee-chan moves. I didn't finished the boar because I don't have enough offensive power. I'm not

scared at all.

「F-flame」

A magic square appears under the boar, and a pillar of flame rises from the square, killing the boar.

As expected of Onee-chan's magic. Something like a boar dies with only one blow.

Onee-chan looks relieved after she kills it.

After that, Master taught Onee-chan the skinning method, and the 3 of us then went around and skinned the boars.

As usual, I couldn't hear Master's feelings, but it looked like she had fun.

It looks like Onee-chan is really relieved she was able to kill the boar.

Onee-chan was really scared a while ago, but it looks like she's already accustomed to Master.

Onee-chan, you are slightly too easy.

Where did the materials from the boars disappear to?

Master says it's a magic. Master is surely amazing to be able to use such magic.

On the way back, Master and Onee-chan are walking side-by-side. I also got accustomed to Master, and little by little I was able to speak with her. It was about this time that I was finally able to hear Master's feelings of joy. It was faint, but it was heard. However, in the middle of listening, the feelings were cut off. I wonder why?

Along the way, we were surrounded by 4 men. I can hear feelings of joy from all of them. These people are enjoying the situation.

Mysteriously though, I'm not scared. It's probably because Master is strong, and she will do something about this. That's how I feel.

Onee-chan suddenly takes out her sword though.

I also grab a hold onto Master's clothes without her noticing.

A man has touched Master's shoulder.

For some reason, Master doesn't move.

At that time, I could hear faint feelings from Master.

This is... worry? The feelings are faint, so I'm not sure.

I tried concentrating to listen better.

As soon as another man touched Onee-chan's shoulder, his arm all the way up the shoulder, was cut off.

At the same time, I could hear Master's feelings so strongly that it made me dizzy.

This is... anger and hatred... grief?

A lot of feelings are mixed in, so I'm not too sure.

However, Master got angry for our sake. That much I do understand.

Master raises her sword to finish off one of the men that are lying on the ground.

I have to stop her.

If Master kills these people, it's possible that a bounty will be placed on her head, and then once again we sisters would be sold as slaves.

I don't want that. I need to become strong enough to protect someone.

「Don't...」

I practically said that in a whisper, but Master still stopped.

Master takes a deep breath.

Amazing, I could hear such angry, wild feelings, and all of the them stopped instantly.

「Sorry」

While I'm being impressed by Master, for some reason she apologizes. She even surprisingly lowered her head. I haven't heard of anyone lowering their head to a slave before.

「No, no, please don't apologize. Thank you for getting angry for our sake」

Onee-chan is right, there's no need for Master to apologize.

「Thank you very much」

Me and Onee-chan lower our heads while thanking Master.

Master might not be a bad person, and it looks like she holds us dear.

I've decided, that no matter what happens I will follow this person. If I follow this person, just as I wanted, I'll be able to get the power I need. That's what I think.

Onee-chan probably thinks the same.

And –

「Let's return for now, Sara needs a wash」

– I want to know more about this person.

While thinking such things, I took Master's hand.

Chapter 5

After washing Sara's body off in a river near the Imperial Capital, we are heading back to the adventurer's guild to report the results. However, there's a problem.

「I can't buy a bag」

With the money I have, I can buy a small bag, but I can't afford to buy a bag that's big enough to hold all of the boar's meat and tusks. I can put the herbs and fangs in the small bag, and after getting the money for those, I can buy another bag for the meat. That's what I'm thinking, but because it's weird to bring only the tusks back without the meat, the idea is rejected. There's no bag small enough to hold only the herbs. Prices in this world are surprisingly high.

Handing the materials over directly out of the item box would stand out too much, so I can't do that.

Now, what should I do?

「Ano, Master what's the problem?」

Asked a worried Sara.

In this case, let's listen to the twins.

I tell the two that I don't want to show other people my item box magic, and that I can't afford a bag for the materials.

「Can you take out the items in the item box anywhere?」

I nod at Mira's question.

「Then, buy a decently sized bag, and make it look like you're taking items out of that bag, but take them from the item box instead. That way it would be as if you're taking the items out of the bag.」

「Accepted」

After stroking Mira's head, I buy a suitable bag at a street stall with the remainder of our money, and we head to the adventurer's guild.

We hadn't encountered any trouble along the way, but the atmosphere at the

guild was really bad.

I don't know why everyone is so nervous. What happened?

「Did something happen?」

I asked the receptionist Onee-san.

「Aa、actually a party of rank 5 adventurers was found on the brink of death near the city. Everyone thinks a strong monster did it, so everyone is nervous」

Hee, I would like to fight this monster.

Well, now isn't a good time though.

I finish the requests, and pass over all the excess boar material. All for 550 Gill. I also had my rank raised to 2. It looks like there's no exam needed to rank up from 1 to 2.

Also, I asked receptionist Onee-san about an inn. She said the cheapest one cost 100 Gill per night.

It seems that recently the prices have been raised, and beginner adventurers are having a hard time making a living.

I say my thanks to the receptionist and leave the guild. It's time to shop. The weapon shop is first. Sara has a means of attacking, but Mira doesn't since light magic is a recovery type magic.

「Welcome」

When we enter the weapon shop, a small bearded man welcomes us. Definitely a dwarf.

Dwarves are a standard when it comes to weapon shops.

「Choose a cheap weapon to your liking」

Personally, If I were Sara, I would choose a wand that increases magic power. I'd get a bow if I were Mira, but I'll let them choose what they like.

When I said that the twins should choose a weapon that they like, both of them were puzzled, but soon they began to look around.

In the meantime, I focused on my own business.

「Storekeeper, can you fix this?」

I show him the katana I broke when I was fighting the boars.

「Hou, a sword? It's unusual, but I can fix it」
「Please」

After I handed over my katana to the storekeeper, the twins walked up with the weapons they had chosen.

Mira had picked a bow as I expected, and Sara chose a sword.

When I asked Mira why she chose a bow, she said that she wants to be able to protect people on her own.

「A total of 250 Gill, and the sword will be ready tomorrow at noon」

I pass the money, receive the goods, and leave the store. I'm now left with 300 Gill. I wanted to buy armor as well, but I would probably spend a lot and wouldn't have enough money left to stay at an inn.

「Slaves are refused here」

2 hours have already passed while we were searching for an inn. It's already dark, and traffic has decreased. I didn't eat anything today, so I'm very hungry. The treatment of slaves is crueller than I thought though. Every inn has refused to take slaves.

When I asked where slaves could stay, I was told that they could camp outside the city.

People who buy slaves, like the many adventurers and nobles, let them stay outside the city where they are attacked by monsters. The lowest priced slaves are treated like trash. If they can't be used, they are thrown out.

「I'm sorry, Master」

「We are fine camping outside. At the very least Master should stay at an inn」

「Rejected」

I cut the suggestion of the twins off right away.

If I left these two outside by themselves, they'd be attacked right away. There are a lot of dangerous nocturnal monsters. There's also the danger of being attacked by bandits.

Therefore, I can't let the twins stay outside by themselves.

If possible, I wanted to rest in a bed, but there's no helping it.

「I will sleep outside as well」

「Eh」

「Master?」

I've decided on this, so there's no room to talk.

I took both of the girl under my arms, and headed to the general store to buy small tents.

After surprising the twins, I take their hands and walk towards the gate.

The gate was already closed, but I told the soldier at the gates that we were going to camp outside, and he opened the gates for us as we headed out of the Imperial Capital.

We then walked along the outer wall of the capital towards the river Sara had washed in. I saw plenty of other people camping out along the way.

Not all of them were enslaved, but most probably were. It looks like there's a lot of slaves in this city.

There were some people near the river where we had planned to sleep.

「Let's camp here」

I take out a tent. I have Sara and Mira, who have experience in camping, assemble the tent.

I also wanted to help out, but I've never built a tent before, and I would only drag the twins down. So while they are doing that, I'm going to hunt prey for our dinner.

The forest is about 1 kilometer away, but since I'm on my own I can get there in 1 minute.

Because I was anxious about leaving the two girl waiting for a long time, I cut down a tree. I then cut it into round slices and put it in my item box.

On the way back, I found a horde of wolves using [Detection].
Today's dinner.

When I return, the twins were still assembling the tent.

「Welcome back, Master. You haven't been out for long」
「I flew」

I take out the logs, that I had cut into round slices earlier, out of the false item bag, away from the twins so as not to disturb them.

It seems like I'm used to this after only a day.

After taking out the logs, it's time to skin the wolves.

I hunted 8 of them, but it's a dinner for three women, so I only skin 2 of them.

I will skin the rest tomorrow with the help of the twins.

First I cut the head off with a sword, and then I skinned the fur off the body with the knife I borrowed from Mira.

On Earth I was very clumsy, but this body is quite dexterous, so this task is really easy.

Because only the meat and fur of a wolf will sell, I'll put the rest of the parts in the item box and throw them away somewhere later. If the parts were disposed here, the smell could attract monsters.

Monsters are quite mysterious. Even though they're alive, blood doesn't flow through their veins and yet their organs are still active, and their flesh is fresh. It may be good for me to learn more about monsters soon.

After I finish skinning the wolves, I have Sara light the firewood.

Magic is convenient. I want to learn it.

I stab the meat with a bone, and roast the meat on the fire.

After confirming that the meat is golden in color, I bite into it.

「It's not that good」

Is it because I didn't use seasoning? Is seasoning for wolf meat even sold?

No, right now clothes are the priority.

I'm still wearing the <<IDO>> beginner equipment, but the twins are still in their slave outfits, and I want them to look nicer.

Let's buy new clothes first thing in the morning.

Then I notice that the slaves that had been around us started to gather.

Everyone is wearing the slave outfit. Perhaps the slaves of an adventurer? I believe a noble's slave would at least have some decent clothing.

Still, what is going on?

If someone touches the twins, I will kill them.

「Ano, won't you share the meat, please?」

Mira and Sara have sad expressions while watching the slaves.

Do they sympathize with them because they are slaves as well?

Looking at the slaves carefully, they look very weak and skinny, and they look ill. I guess it's because they don't have tents and sleep on the ground.

As for me, I don't really care, but I want to grant the wish of the twins, so I prepare the rest of the wolves reluctantly. Their meat and bones, as well as some firewood, will be handed over. Sara seems to be the one to light the fire.

「This is absolutely secret」

Of course I tell them not to tell others.

If the rest of the slaves came it would become troublesome.

Well, even if they do come, I will send them away with [Coercion].

While passing the meat, everyone conveys their gratitude to us. Seeing Mira and Sara happy for being thanked, it makes me happy too.

We enter the tent after eating our share of the food. As expected, the tent is very narrow. If I save up enough money, I'll buy a bigger tent.

Author notes:

1 Gill = 10 Yen

The available coins are the 1 Gill coin, 10 Gill coin, 100 Gill coin, 1000 Gill coin, and the 10,000 Gill coins.

The king handed Maika about 200,000 Gill.

Slaves are priced the same as consumables, except for certain slaves.

Chapter 6

When I woke up, the sun still had yet to rise.
The system screen shows that it's 5:00 am. I guess because I'm not used to sleeping in a tent, I woke up earlier than usual, but I'm not tired at all.
After all, the specs of this body are crazy. What was the guy that summoned me thinking, giving me such a body?

While touching the tattoo of the sleeping twins, I say status.
I can grasp the status of my slaves by doing so.
In the case of adventurers and commoners, status is used as a display of social standing.

Sara Lv10 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Fire> Lv4
- Magic <Wind> Lv2
- Magic <Water> Lv1

Mira Lv7 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Light> Lv1
- Cooking Lv3

Their levels are rising wonderfully.
Sara has killed one boar, but Mira hasn't defeated anything yet.
If that's the case, how did her level get so high?
Is this normal? No, after only killing one boar, this can't be normal.

Perhaps they got exp from the boars I defeated?
The experience the master gets is shared to their slaves, is this a common thing in this world? Uun, I don't understand.
For the time being, because we gave away the rest of the wolf meat, I have to go hunt for breakfast.

I step out of the tent, and activate my [Detection] skill.

There are 4 boars 3 kilometers away. It's slightly far away, but I'll go.

Sara Lv11 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Fire> Lv4
- Magic <Wind> Lv2
- Magic <Water> Lv1

Mira Lv8 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Light> Lv1
- Cooking Lv3

After we finished eating breakfast, I checked Sara and Mira's statuses again, and their levels rose again.

Apparently the experience from the monsters I kill are shared amongst the twins. With this, I'm convinced. However, is this ordinary, or is this one of my cheats?

「Is something wrong, Master?」

「Is there something weird in our statuses?」

「No, everything is okay. Fold the tent」

Maa, even if I think about it, I can't tell the level of other people, so let's not worry about it for now.

The tent is folded and put into the item box, and afterwards, I take the twins with me to the adventurer's guild to sell the boar and wolf materials.

There was a request for wolf's fur on the bulletin board, so I take it, and with the extra materials I had, I received 900 Gill.

After that, I go back to the bulletin board to get another request.

There are more than 10 requests of rank 3.

Aside from monster subjugation, the "gathering materials from monsters" type of request is popular too.

Because requests of this rank aren't that dangerous, they've disappeared from the board completely.

By the way, how do you confirm a subjugation request? It seems that the monster's name and number will appear on the guild card, and if the person who

took the request, his party, or his slaves defeat the monster, it will be reflected on his guild card.

This guild card is wastefully high-tech. I wonder why it's like that.

Because there weren't any subjugation requests, today I've got:

– 5 pieces of boar's meat: rank 2

Reward: 250 Gill

– 5 boar tusks: rank 2

Reward: 250 Gill

– 5 pieces of wolf's meat: rank 3

Reward: 500 Gill

These 3 requests.

I fought boars yesterday, and they were weak enough that the twins should be able to take them down, so I will leave this request to them.

The wolves may be dangerous though, so I'll stop their movements with [Coercion] if it gets dangerous. (Ed: I assume she's talking about dangerous for the twins. Unless the author forgot Maika has already hunted wolves.)

「Hey, could I have a little of your time, please?」

I took the request forms to the reception desk, and the reception Onee-san called out to me.

Does she need something?

「Actually, I have a favor to ask of you」

I put on a smile, but my eyes aren't smiling at all.

While I released [Coercion] yesterday, this Onee-san was unaffected.

This pressure... just who?

「Ojii-san...」

The face of the slave dealer Ojii-san appears in front of Mira.

Yeah, that's it. This overwhelming feeling is the same as from that slave dealer.

「Are you perhaps slaves from my father's place?」

「It's not grandfather, but father?」

「Ara, do I look that young? I'm happy. Well, let's just leave it at that. Will you please accept my request? I think you are the most suitable for it」

「Ask someone else」

「To be honest, all the other adventurers are too weak. I went to the castle to ask the heroes first, but those children are still too weak. When they grow up they will get much stronger, but it will take some time. However, compared to them...」

Onee-san stares at me while squinting her eyes. I don't like those eyes. It looks like I'm being observed, and it doesn't feel good.

「You really are strong! I've seen countless adventurers and monsters, but you are way stronger than any of them. You could probably defeat the Demon Lord on your own」

Just who is this fellow?
She can see through my strength, and she wants to use it for a personal request. She's not just a normal receptionist.

「Thinking about it, I haven't introduced myself yet! I'm the president of the World Union of Guilds, Maria Hanesuto. I would be happy to be in your care from now on」

... What is such a VIP doing behind the reception desk of the adventurer's guild?

「Well, if you want to ask something, just ask. I'd like to associate with you for a long time」

As the sun rises, the number of people in the guild has decreased, and we have moved to a meeting room in the guild.

If possible, I wanted to leave, but since the opponent is such a VIP, and I don't know what would happen if I left, I decided to keep her company.

「Maria-san is...」

「You can refer to me without honorifics」

「... How did you notice me Maria?」

「I noticed your unusual strength thanks to my special ability」

「Ability? Not a skill?」

「That's right. In this world, there are people that have extremely rare skills that do not belong to the normal types of skills. I don't know why people have them though. My ability is to visually see the status of others. Because it's such an

ability I usually cover it, so please don't spread it, okay?」

She winked at me. Creepy.

Thinking about it, the King said something about heroes having some special abilities. Is this the same?

After Maria started talking about her ability, the twins tensed up.

Perhaps these two have some hidden abilities as well?

I'm interested, but I'd hate to force them to tell me, so I'll wait for the day when they tell me about it themselves.

「Next question. What is the World Union of Guilds?」

「As the name suggests, it is an organization of guilds scattered across the world that do not belong to any country. I'm at the top. The most important person in the guild」

「... Why are you a receptionist at this adventurer's guild then?」

「The king of this country summoned heroes from another world. I'm in touch with someone at the castle you see, and while confirming the situation, I took a job as a receptionist to find more strong adventurers」

If she has a contact in the castle, does that mean she knows that I was summoned along with the heroes?

「Of course, I know your situation. I'm sorry for you, but I think it's a good thing that you got caught up in the summoning with the heroes. Since you weren't a genuine hero, that incompetent king let you go」

「What do you mean?」

「That fellow, he turns the heroes into his chess pieces, and in order to protect himself, he engaged his 3 daughters to the heroes. The most important post of the country will be lost without the heroes. I wonder if at this moment he's using his daughters to tempt the heroes?」

Uwa, that king is the worst kind of scum. I'm glad I refused at that time.

Maa, I've heard everything I wanted to know, so let's listen to what this request is about.

I'll at least listen. Whether or not I accept it is another thing.

「Then, what's your request about?」

「Finally you asked about it. My request, is to buy some slaves at my father's

place and go to the dungeon that humankind has yet to explore. It's the Dragon Valley in the Lost Forest. The rank of the dungeon varies though. Also, if possible, I want you to bring me materials from that place. Of course, I will reward you for doing so.」

From the names such as Dragon Valley and Lost Forest, it's understandable that these places are dangerous, but shouldn't high ranking dungeons be entrusted to adventurers of the same rank?

Also, why do I have to take the slaves? I don't understand.

「The rank of the dungeon is not based on the rank needed to clear it, but the rank at which the party can safely return. A party may be able to clear it, but the adventurers with a high enough rank are few in numbers, and most are affiliated with some country. That's why we can't assemble a party」

Maria seemed annoyed when she said that, and her beautiful face has twisted.

「I want you to take a slave with you, because raising the level of a slave is faster with a contract, and slaves that have more talent than a normal person will become stronger even faster. For example, these two, yesterday they had the power of a normal child, but now they are as strong as a beginner adventurer. Because talented people are poached by countries, I want the adventurer's guild to get some talented people as well. So, I want you to raise one. At my father's place, there's an able slave」

I see, the reason the levels of these two grew so fast, was I the reason? If I'm the cause, then I can accept the reason. It must be because of my [Growth] skill.

It's surprising that the skill also has an effect on my contracted slaves. Or, did the skill change when I came to this world? I didn't look, so I don't know. It may be better to check if any of my skills have changed since I got here.

「The reward?」

「I will buy all the materials you collect at a high price, and I will also raise your guild rank to 10. I will give you 200,000 Gill up front. I'll also give you 1 horse-drawn carriage, and a magic tool to copy a slave's tattoo. With this tool, a slave's tattoo can be made invisible」

「I understand. I'll do it」

To be honest, I had no intention of accepting the request.
Taking the twins with me would be very dangerous.
However, slaves that have a contract with me level faster, and when I heard that I'd also be able to hide the slave tattoo, I changed my mind.
Above all, if a slave could get an invisible tattoo, in this world where slaves are discriminated against, these two could live a normal life.

「As for the slaves, buy another two」
「Aa, I understand」

Indeed, taking any more than that would be bothersome.
Plus, with someone like me, who's bad with strangers, caring for another two may be tough, but I think it's necessary for Sara and Mira to have some friends, so I will bear with it.
Ah yes, there was something else I had wanted to ask.

「Just why are you placing this request?」
「For world peace」

It was an immediate response.
Are you kidding me, was what I thought, but she looked me straight in the eyes with a serious look, and it does look like she's truly serious about it.

「This world is in danger. Dangerous monsters lurk in dungeons, and they are gradually increasing in number. I don't want to say this, but the people of this world can't defeat them alone. If every country cooperated, we may have a chance, but kings only think of themselves, and if there's no harm done to them, then they aren't interested in world affairs. However, I really want to do something about it, and it's regrettable, but we have no power. Therefore, I asked you before it was too late」

A wrinkle appears on Maria's forehead.
Honestly, I don't understand Maria's way of thinking.
If anything, I can sympathize with the kings.
If I'm safe, the country is safe. That's what they're thinking.
Although I don't care if some stranger is suffering, it's unforgivable to touch what's mine. The lowest kind of human, but I think the same way.
If someone like that cared for world peace, how weird would that be. That kind

of stuff should only be done by someone with a sense of justice.

「Ano, Master, if everyone is in trouble, then we'd like to help them. Though we may be a nuisance at first, we will get stronger! Therefore...」

Hearing Maria's story, the twins that were quiet until now spoke with determination, and their eyes, that are filled with a sense of justice, are looking at me.

I understand what the twins are saying. I don't understand why they want to help others so much, and honestly I don't care about world peace, but if these two wish for it, I can only support their feelings.

「Leave it to me」

「Thank you, to all of you. It will take some time to prepare the new guild card, the money, and the carriage, so you should first head to father's place. I will pay for the new slaves you buy, so just choose whichever slaves you like. You can ask my father for the magic tool」

Maria smiled with relief, and I thought about our future plans. It looks like today is going to be busy.

Chapter 7

「I heard the story. Please, follow me」

After leaving the adventurer's guild we headed to the slave shop. The pressure this old man is releasing is tremendous as always.

Do the twins have trouble dealing with this Ojii-san? Ever since we've arrived, they've been clinging to me, and they don't seem to want to leave my side. I'm happy that I'm being relied on, but it's hard to walk like this. I take the twin's hands and follow the old man downstairs.

When we got to the basement, Ojii-san said he'd prepare the magic tool, and went somewhere else.

Although the store looks small, the basement is huge, and there are more than 50 prison cells down here. There seems to be a large number of women in the cells, and it doesn't look like there are many men here.

When I asked the person in charge of the slaves about it, he told me that the owner goes around the entire country and collects slaves. The reason that almost everyone in the cells is female seems to be because there are a lot of nobles in the area.

Nobles want to buy slaves as pets, and therefore they are only looking for beautiful female slaves. The slaves that the owner collects don't sell for some reason though.

I heard what I wanted to hear, so I said my thanks. I'll go and look around. To be honest, when I bought Mira and Sara I didn't look around, and just bought them when the owner showed them to me. This time I'll choose properly.

It's the first time I've seen someone from the beastman clan, a 15 year old beastman female from the dog tribe. Since it's my first time seeing a beastman, I'll properly take a good look. There are dog ears growing out from her short brown hair, and there's a tail growing out from her bottom. (Ed: It didn't specify dog ears, and just said ears, but I'm assuming she's like any other beastman from light novels, and has animalistic ears on the top of her head) When I chose her, she wagged her tail in joy.

There's another slave that's in chains and gagged for some reason. With silver hair long enough to reach the floor, and pure white skin, is a 13 year old girl. Because I smelled trouble, I didn't want to choose her at first, but it seemed that Mira and Sara wanted to help her, so I ended up choosing her.

I was certain that she was a human, but she's actually from the vampire tribe. Demons usually live in Maou's kingdom, and don't normally leave their territory, but somehow this girl ended up wandering to this country and becoming a slave after being captured by Ojii-san.

This girl seems to be quite the problem child. The person in charge was crying tears of joy, and then thanked me for taking her.

I went back up to the store to look for Ojii-san, so that I could tell him I had finished choosing my 2 slaves, but it seems that he had customers. Something is strange though. Ojii-san is emitting a tremendous amount of pressure and his tone is very sharp. It seems that he's trying to drive out the customer.

Eventually, the well-dressed young noble leaves the store.

「Oya, already done?」

After the air around Ojii-san settles down, I tell him that I chose a beastman girl and a vampire girl. I wanted to ask about the customer who was here a little while ago, but he probably wouldn't tell me, so I didn't ask.

「Fumu, Celika and Charlotte. However, Charlotte is... No, it should be fine if it's you」

Eh, what's with his reaction? To get such a reaction from even Ojii-san! This vampire, is she that troublesome? I chose her because Mira and Sara wanted to help her, but now I feel like cancelling my order.

「How would you like to set up the contract?」

「Celika can have the same contract as the twins. Charlotte, however, can't drink blood without my permission. Attacking anyone besides me without my permission is also prohibited, and any orders I give her are absolute」

By the way, the contract I have with the twins only has one term. They can't run away from me. Because the twins are good girl though, I don't plan on adding any more rules to their contract. Celika seems to be a good girl as well, so

she can get the same treatment.

Charlotte seems to be a problem child though, so I decided to make her contract more strict. I included that she can't selfishly attack anyone besides me because, even if I'm attacked I can still repel her. Besides, I want to see how vampires fight.

After Ojii-chan said 「Certainly」, he withdrew, and after a while he returned with 4 rings in his hand.

It looks like these rings are magic tools that can form a contract without the tattoo. When the master and slave spill a drop of blood on the rings, the contract is completed. Because the contract is cancelled when the master's ring is broken, Ojii-chan recommends handling it carefully.

I complete the new contract with Mira and Sara right away to verify that the tattoos will actually vanish.

「Uwa, amazing」

「It really disappeared」

The twins were impressed, and their gazes kept switching between their hands and mine. It would be bad to lose the ring, so I put it in my item box. I wouldn't want this thing to break.

After completing the contract with the twins, I go down to the basement to form the contract with Celica.

「A, Ano, thank you very much! I will do my best, so please treat me well!」

「Best regards. Get along with the twins」

Celica is nervous, but she cutely bows.

She's a good spirited child. It looks like these three will get along well.

Celica Lv7 Talent 8

Skills

– Blacksmithing Lv5

– Hammer Lv7

– Avoidance Lv3

「Blacksmith?」

When I look at her status, there's a skill called [Blacksmithing]. Smithing seems like a macho thing, so I didn't expect her to have it.

「A, hai! I learned smithing from my father, and I seem to have obtained the skill when I was helping him」

Fumu, in this world, can you obtain skills by doing certain actions pertaining to the skill?

Looking at Celica's status, her level is higher than normal, so she must have some experience fighting against monsters.

If that's the case, I don't really need to worry about taking her into battle.

After Celica, Mira, and Sara complete their self introductions, they already seem to be good friends.

Accompanied by the three, I head to the cell where the last one is.

Because it's dangerous for them to be in this cell, only me and Ojii-chan go inside.

Because she's tied up and can't move, I manage to finish the contract easily. The problem starts now though. Since I've made the contract, I'm going to remove the chains, and I'll probably be attacked.

Charlotte Alister Lv1 Talent 10

Skills

- Magic <Darkness> Lv1
- Flight Lv5
- Automatic recovery Lv1
- Grapple Lv1
- Avoidance Lv1

Well, as far as this status goes, even if I do get attacked, nothing will happen. At this level, even the three girls outside the cage could manage somehow. After putting the ring back into the item box, I remove the chains.

First, I remove the chains from her right hand. I was hit, but I ignore it since it didn't do any damage.

Then, I remove the chains from her left hand. She is strangling me, but I ignore it since I'm not taking any damage.

Next are the chains on her feet. Now, since her body has become free, she

jumped. This is indeed quite troublesome, so I sent her flying with a flick to the forehead.

I remove the blindfold covering her eyes, and the gag restricting her mouth while she's in pain.

「Y, you! Someone as lowly as a human dares to shackle me. Did you think you could get away with it!」

No, with tears in your eyes you aren't scary at all.

「Thank you very much. May God bless you on your journey」

With those departing words from Ojii-chan, I leave the slave shop. When we go outside, even though the sun has already risen, the vampire, Charlotte, seems to still be fine, so I guess she's a higher ranking vampire. Unlike the low ranking vampires, the sun doesn't seem to hurt her. However, it seems she gets sleepy during the day because she's nocturnal, so she's often rubbing her eyes and yawning. I had trouble getting her out and about at this time of the day, so I had to give her an order. Now, she's following quietly.

「I'm Sara. Nice to meet you」

「I'm Mira. Pleased to make your acquaintance」

「My name is Celica. Let's get along」

In the back, Sara, Mira, and Celica introduced themselves to Charlotte. Charlotte had a grumpy face though, and turned her head away from the three and didn't respond to them.

However, because her ears ended up turning red, I guess she must be shy. I wonder if she's actually a good child.

When I look at them, even though they are from different races, they look like good sisters. The oldest one would be Celica, the second oldest is Sara, the third is Mira, and the youngest would be Charlotte. If I was with them, I would look like an old fart. I've also been defeated by Celica in various parts of the body. Thinking about it, I don't know about women, but there are a lot of tall people in this world. The four of them are still in their growth period, so they will probably get bigger. Are? If that's the case, then would I become the smallest one?... No, no, let's not think about this anymore. It's going to be just fine.

Come to think of it, I didn't ask what a vampire like Charlotte was doing in such a place.

... Maa, let's just ask her later.

Chapter 8

When we returned to the adventurer's guild, there was a horse-drawn carriage waiting for us in front of the building. It looks like the preparations are complete. Even if I say it's a horse-drawn carriage, it's not led by a horse, but by a golem in the shape of a horse. It seems the golem has an embedded dungeon core giving it life.

This is also a kind of magic tool. Usually when a golem is summoned, it needs a steady flow of mana, or it will stop moving. The dungeon core works as the power source, so mana isn't necessary though. When I placed my hand on the golem, I could feel something moving inside. It gave me a slightly bad feeling. Maria said that to become the owner of this golem, I would need to pour magic into it. It was the first time I've poured magic into an object, but I wonder if this is the same feeling you get when using magic skills. Something started to flow from my body. It felt terrible.

Anyway, with this, the contract with the golem is complete. The golem won't move without me giving it an order.

After I made the contract with the golem, I received the money and guild card from Maria, and then I was handed a magic tool used for communication. Maria needed to attend to some business that had suddenly appeared, so after she gave me what she had promised, she disappeared using a magic tool made for teleportation.

Since we're leaving tomorrow, we'll shop for the necessities we'll need for travelling today. I also need to get rid of those slave clothes, so let's buy some new clothes first.

「Ano, is that really okay?」

The bewildered Sara asked. I nod that it's okay in response. This is the largest clothing store in the capital, and it seems that this particular brand we're looking at is famous all over the world. At first, when the girls entered the store, the clerk was unpleasant. When I showed him the recommendation I received from Maria however, his attitude changed completely. I had to explain that to the girl though.

Have the girls never entered a store like this before? No one has moved from their spot since they entered, except for Charlotte who is happily looking around. I want them to follow Charlotte's example a little, even though she's picking all the expensive clothes.

「Human, I decided on this!」
「Rejected, put it back」
「Why?!」

Look at the price, the price.
If I buy you such expensive clothing, I won't have enough for the others.

「Gununu...」 (ぐぬぬ)
「It's no use, even if you stare. Return it」
「Tsk」

She returned the clothes while complaining and clicking her tongue grandly, and then set off, looking for different clothes.

「Hey, everyone go choose something」
I had to push the other 3 in and tell them to quickly go choose their clothes. Well, I might as well pick some clothes out for myself too.

「Thank you very much for buying me clothes」
「Thank you very much, Maika-san」
「Thank you」
「Thanks for this tribute, human」

After we leave the store, Celica, Sara, and Mira bow their heads while saying thanks. I flick the forehead of the last girl, and tell them not to worry about it. Sara addressed me as Maika-san, and not Master. That's because I told them to refer to me like that. If they continued to call me Master, people would notice that they're slaves, and it could become troublesome. Although I wouldn't mind if they dropped the honorifics as well, it seems that's not possible for them. As for the clothes, since none of the other 3 were able to choose for themselves, I picked some random clothes for them. I'm a person who doesn't care about fashion, so I have zero fashion sense. However, as expected, the three bishoujo look good in anything.

Only Charlotte picked a frilly black gothic-like dress out for herself. To be frank, it stands out too much, but the person in question looks happy, so it's alright. Because it wasn't too expensive, I'll only give her 1 forehead flick.

「Welcome」

When we left the clothing shop, it was getting to be about the right time for lunch, so we entered a nearby shop and got something to eat. It's the first time I'll have decent food in this world, but apparently this world's cuisine seems to be poorly developed. Hard bread and tasteless soup, just one grilled fish and some meat, raw vegetables and fruits, and only water and sake. I asked the twins, who had travelled a lot, about this, and it seems this is a normal meal.

When I asked if they could at least season it somehow, I got 「What's a seasoning?」 in response. I felt despair.

I was used to the rich food cuisine of Japan, and in comparison this world's diet is unbearable.

I used the communication type magic tool that I received from Maria, and asked her if seasoning really doesn't exist in this world. Seasonings such as salt and pepper seem to be only very rarely found in dungeons of a high ranking. Because the seasonings are so rare, all of it is given to royalty if it's found. Few people even know of its existence.

Fufufu, I see... seasonings can be found in high-ranking dungeons...

「Hii-」

「Yikes, what's with the creepy smile, human?」

Oops, I got so excited that my laugh leaked.

I apologize to the frightened Sara, and flick Charlotte's forehead.

「Nuoo, do you want my forehead to swell?」

「Everyone, listen up」

I ignore the loud Charlotte, and inform the girls that tomorrow I'll be going into a rank 6 dungeon that's 20 kilometers away.

When I suddenly announce that I'll be exploring the dungeon alone, everyone has an uneasy face. I patiently wait for their answer. Charlotte, who is still shaking her head in pain, said that they would follow me.

I feel guilty for forcing them, but my diet depends on this.

I swore in my heart that I would protect everyone.

Since lunch is over, I'm heading over to retrieve the sword I left at the weapon shop yesterday, and while I'm there I'll buy some weapons for Celica and Charlotte.

「Ojou-chan, the weapon has been repaired」

「Thank you」

「No, no, it has been a while since I've repaired such a good weapon. I should be the one thanking you」

Eh? Good weapon? This is the initial equipment from <<IDO>> though. Just how bad are the weapons from this world?

Charlotte seems to be fine fighting bare handed, so I only buy a hammer for Celica. Afterwards, we leave the store.

After hearing about my weapon's quality from the storekeeper earlier, I became curious about the weapons from this world, so I put Celica's hammer in the item box and looked at the status of the weapon.

– Hammer: rank1

Durability 40/40

STR+1

What the?...

When compared to my sword, the difference is obvious.

– Sword :rank3

Durability 96/100

STR+5

Oh, this is bad.

Really, what's with this world?

I unconsciously hit the handle of the poor quality hammer.

「Excuse me, but is something wrong Maika-san?」

「No, everything is fine」

I return the hammer to the anxious Celica. Because it would be troublesome to

be asked about it later, I explain that the item box I have is my special magic skill. At this rate, I can't be expecting to purchase good armor.

As expected, none of the armor can compare to my beginner set. It would be better to enter the dungeon as soon as possible, and hope to get some good loot...

Once we're out of the armor shop, I go and buy some food at a market. Lastly, we go to the shop where I had bought the tent yesterday. There are a lot of things to buy here, so I decided to divide the work.

Mira is buying the cookware, Sara the bedding for outdoors, Celica the tools for repairing weapons and armor, and Charlotte and I are heading to purchase some medicine.

「Why must a lady like myself be forced to go together with a human like you...」

I'm going with Charlotte because I don't know what would happen if I left her alone.

Charlotte is complaining as I led her by the hand to the medicine shelf. There are only potions here. I secretly put one in the item box, and looked at its status.

– Potion, rank2

Slightly faster healing of scratches and cuts.

Healing someone with Mira's magic would be faster. Still, I'll buy 10 potions just in case, but I don't think they'll be of any use.

When all the shopping has been finished, it seems the day has already turned to evening.

It's time to look for an inn, but where would be a good place?

Thinking about it, since I came here I haven't had a bath. Alright, let's look for an inn with a bath.

「A bath? There probably aren't any baths at any of the normal inns」
「A lady like myself will not stay at a place that doesn't have a bath」

I still have a lot of money left, so let's go to the most expensive inn.

Chapter 9

「I-Is it really okay for us to stay in this room?」

「Terrific. Just how much money did this cost?」

「It's the first time I've stayed in a room like this」

「Fuhahahaha, look, this bed is so soft!」

I found out about this inn through rumors around town. 30,000 Gill/night per person. This is a supreme inn for high-ranking noble families.

The luxurious facilities balance out the cost though. The room is so spacious, that even with 5 people in a room, there's still plenty of space.

Moreover, there's a vast bath and restroom. Above all though, there's an all-you-can-eat meal. As expected of an inn for nobles. The meal is seasoned, it's not enough for my Earthly tastes, but it's still good. The other 4 sitting with me have never eaten anything like these delicious dishes before, so they were crying tears of joy. Honestly, I was a little worried about staying at an inn like this. Still, Charlotte has a surname, so one would think that a member of the demon nobility would have eaten food with seasoning before.

「Girls, take a bath first」

「Maika-san won't enter?」

「I'll take one later」

Since we're done with the meal, it's time to take a bath, so I tell the girls to go first.

I doubt I'd be able to relax with everyone there. I'm the type that likes to enjoy baths slowly.

Besides, I want to confirm something.

「We understand」

「Celica and Mira, you two take care of the other two」

「Yes」

I asked the two of them to take care of Sara and Charlotte who had run off to the bath by themselves. Afterwards, I pull up the status screen.

Name: Maika Lv1000

MP: 1000
STR: 1000
VIT: 1000
AGI: 1000
INT: 1000
DEX: 1000

[Skills] Dual Wielding Lv100
Detection Lv100
Katana Lv100
Action Limit Release Lv100
Grapple Lv100
Coercion Lv100
Abandonment Lv100
Automatic Recovery Lv100
Abnormal State Immunity Lv100
Growth Lv100

Hero Lv—
Gathering Lv32
Cooking Lv28

「I was right after all. There are more skills than before」

I look at the second page of the status screen and confirm that there are new skills. When I first saw the broken status screen, I was taken by surprise. I blame myself for not noticing the second page.

Hero – it's an existence that appears when the world is in a crisis. Salvation for humanity, and an ally of justice. Not a selfish human like me.

When I thought about, it was strange from the beginning.
At the start of <<IDO>> I was able to choose 10 skills for some reason, but I didn't think anything in particular about that. What stood out the most was the [Growth] skill.

When I was summoned to this world with the other 3 heroes, they all had the stats of a normal person. However, I had extraordinary stats from the beginning.

While the 3 heroes live peacefully in the castle, together with the discriminated slaves, I, who turned down the King, must embark on a journey to save the world.

Except for a few things, the level of everything else in this world is too low. Those are things that I can overcome on my own though.

Weapons and armor, even the poor quality of tools and cuisine, should be able to improve after I've conquered a high-ranking dungeon.

Why didn't I notice this before?

If I had only noticed this before, I would have acted more carefully.

... No, with this skill, no matter what course of action I take, something is fated to happen.

Why me?

I'm a person who always believed that being a hero would be bothersome.

I have no interest in saving others.

I don't care about world peace.

I'm a person who thinks that as long as me and the things that belong to me are happy, that's enough.

I don't want to become a hero.

I want to live however I like.

However...

「It seems that the twins want to save this world」

When the twins heard Maria's request, their eyes had filled with determination.

The twins who were attacked by bandits and lost their parents.

Because they lacked power, they couldn't save the ones they loved. They blame themselves.

They desire power. I understand those feelings well.

It's just, the difference between me and the twins, is that where I think it's enough to protect myself and that which is mine, Mira and Sara are gentle, and if they had the power to save the world, they would save everyone.

I don't know about Charlotte, but if Celica were in the same situation, she would probably have the exact same feelings as the twins.

Honestly, I can't understand their way of thinking.

「Iyaa, that was a good bath」

「Charlotte-chan, you should dry your hair properly」

「Mira, it hurts. It hurts!」

「Onee-chan, I told you in bath to be quiet didn't I?」

However, these children are mine. I definitely protect what is mine, and besides, I also think I want to grant them their wishes.

Yeah, no need to worry. If their wish is to save people, and if they wish to get stronger, I will grant them those wishes.

The thoughts of being a hero and acquiring peace don't matter to me.

「Oh, Maika-san, the bath is available」

I will grant those children their wishes, and make them happy. Only that matters.

That night, everyone slept on the same bed.

I don't know if it's because the girl were tired or this bed is just that comfortable, but everyone including the nocturnal Charlotte fell asleep right away.

It's early in the morning. It's a good day for a departure.

It's our last meal at this inn, so we ate our breakfast and checked out.

Afterwards, we boarded the carriage that will take us to the adventurer's guild.

「First of all, I'll give this to everyone」

While we were walking in the back streets of the capital, Maria handed the four girls their own adventurer's guild cards, and gave me a merchant's guild card. To aid in the prevention of the theft of the carriage, I received a magic tool that will intercept anyone that approaches the carriage with malicious intents.

「You are a rank 10 adventurer, so you can enter any dungeon without any problems, but these four are all rank 1 so be careful. Still, there's not much use even for rank 10 guild card. Just in case, I also gave you a rank 10 guild card for the merchant's guild. Because the adventurer's guild won't buy any materials they don't need, any unnecessary weapons or armor you find can be sold to merchants guild. You may even open a street stall and sell the items yourself」

No, I have no intention of opening a street stall.

We are heading to a place that no human has ever entered.

Materials from such a place, if sold at a street stall, would attract too much attention. I explain to Maria.

「Certainly. You would stand out even if you sold it to the guild... I know. When selling something, contact me with the magic tool I handed you yesterday. Then, I will use the transfer crystal I have to go to you, and I'll buy the items directly from you」

The transfer crystal from yesterday? That magic tool Maria used after she had given me the carriage?

Are, because it seems to be convenient, I want it.

「I want that」

「I can't give you this. This magic tool is the only one of its kind in the whole world」

When I asked, I was turned down as I had expected.

If I had that, moving around would be so much easier though.

I wonder if it can drop from a monster somewhere?

「Please do as I asked」

「Yeah, leave it to me」

While talking, we arrived at the back entrance of the capital. I firmly grasp the hand that was held out by Maria.

We board the carriage, and I tell the golem our destination.

Our first destination is the rank 6 dungeon I had talked about earlier. I really hope I can find some seasoning there.

Chapter 10

When you hear the word dungeon, what do you imagine?

A person from Earth would imagine a tower that touched the skies, caverns leading to the abyss, or mysterious ruins.

「Is something wrong?」

「No, I'm fine」

I told the worried Celica that everything is fine, and I stopped daydreaming and looked ahead.

It was a door.

A door that you wouldn't be able to find anywhere on Earth. A big number "6" is inscribed on the door.

I look behind the door, nothing. I look around the door, nothing. There's nothing but a front door alone in the grasslands.

「This is the entrance to the dungeon?」

「Yes, that's right」

... What is this, this feeling of disappointment?

Oh well, even if the entrance is like this, the inside is probably like that of a normal dungeon.

Since I don't know what's inside, I have to brace myself.

「What are you doing? If you are not going to go, this lady will go first」

While I was in thought, Charlotte opened the door.

Something shiny and silver approaches Charlotte.

My body moves forward unconsciously. I only noticed that I had moved after I caught the object bare handed.

「Nn? Uoo!? Damn, when did you!?!」

「Move aside」

I shove the surprised Charlotte behind me, and activate [Detection] to confirm whether or not this arrow was shot by a person.

However, after I check the area, I can't find anyone.

This was probably a dungeon trap.

What a trap... How many people has this trap killed?

「Mira, I will give you this. Everyone, stay behind me」

I pass the arrow to Mira, and we all form a line, with me as the vanguard, as we enter the dungeon.

There's a straight road leading in, but there's barely enough space for a single person. There's not enough room to swing any weapons around, so instead of a sword I go bare handed for a while.

I don't know why, but for some reason there isn't any light, and after the door shuts we're wrapped in complete darkness.

It's hard to see, but I think there's a light about 20 meters ahead. I don't know what awaits us there though, so I activate [Avoidance] and [Detection] and advance.

「There's trap over there so be careful」

We advance straight ahead while being careful of traps, and after a while the narrow road starts to get wider.

Apparently this is a mysterious ruins type of dungeon. When we make it to the wide room, we can see a light shining on a wall. It's in my line of sight, so I'm not worried about it.

Right in front of the light is a small hole.

Probably the place where the arrow was shot from.

It was quite the distance, but the arrow still had enough force to kill at the entrance. Just how much power was this arrow shot with?

「The road goes two ways from here」

「Which way should we go?」

I check both paths with [Detection].

There are many enemies on the right, but there is only a single trap. On the other hand, the left path has only 1 enemy, but there are a lot of traps.

Using [Detection] I can understand how many presences there are, the types of enemies, and the types of traps.

A good [Detection] skill is needed to find the hidden doors, treasure chests, and rare materials.

「Which way do you want to go, Sara?」

「Eh, I get to choose!? Then, let's go right」

「Nn, understood」

Honestly, we would be fine whichever direction we went, so I let Sara choose. There is still a single trap, so just like when we had entered, we walk in a line with me at the front.

Even though it's only one trap, it's a type that is easy to trigger. However, if you know the location of the trap, you don't have to worry about it.

After we make it through the passage, we entered a room where there were 3 knights on each side of the room waiting for us.

「Mu, isn't that a treasure chest?」

There's a treasure chest located at the back of the room. Charlotte, who found the chest, tries to go before me, but I pull her back by the neck.

I think I heard the voice of a crushed frog, but even after that I can't allow her to move forward. I want you to endure, Charlotte. I tell everyone to look up without them walking in front of me.

Everyone looks at the collapsing ceiling.

After the ceiling collapses, countless corpses fall down.

Bones and other remains were scattered everywhere.

「Girls, step back」

At my words everyone falls back. I, on the other hand, walk forward into the room.

6 stone knights move at the same time.

I can't use my sword this time, because it seems that my sword would break if I used it against them.

The Golem's height is about 2 meters, and in the center of their forehead is a fist-sized blue pearl. Similar to the one we used for our horse golem, but the color is different.

I wonder if that's the golem's core?

If I get rid of that, will the golems perhaps stop?

I stab a golem through its left side to its bosom with my sword and take out its core. 5 to go. (Ed: I thought she wasn't going to use her sword?)

The golem behind me wanted to smash me together with the golem in front of me, so I kicked the golem and jumped into the air. I smash the golem on my right side while I'm dropping, shattering it. 4 golems left.

I hit the golem on my left with my sword, using enough strength that it's knocked back and collides with another golem. When the golems clash, their cores are destroyed. 2 more.

I quickly yank out the core of a nearby golem. There's only 1 golem remaining.

This should be enough, right?

「Sara, Charlotte, I will hold it down. Attack it with magic. Mira shoot it with your bow」

The remaining golem is sacrificed to raise the skills of the girls. The two girls focus on their magic. Charlotte starts singing something like 「My...」 and 「Jet black...」. It smells of chuunibyou... Un, let's just pretend that I didn't hear that. Mira, please stop laughing. The person in question was serious.

「Flame」
「Abyss!」

「Celica」
「Yes!」

Celica jumps in, takes a big swing, and smashes the golem with her full power. I hear a glass-shattering sound. It seems the golem's core was scattered.

「Well done」

The 4 that defeated a huge monster for the first time are celebrating. Because there aren't any enemies nearby, I leave the 4 to their celebrations and go to open the treasure chest in the back.

When I opened the chest, there were 3 potions inside.

— ??? ? rank ?
? ? ? ? ?

After I took the potions out of the chest, I couldn't see their effects. I take a look at my skills and notice that I've gained [Discovery] and [Appraisal]. I probably can't see the name and effects of the potions because those skills are

still too low.

I looked at the girls statuses to see if they had gained any new skills. Mira got [Bow] and [Hawk Eye], and Sara gained [Detection].

Charlotte obtained [Magic Chanting]. This skill increases the magic power of the spell if you sing while chanting. It suits Charlotte.

I put the potions into the item box and look at the effects.

– Potion rank 6

External wounds heal slightly faster.

As expected, the potions obtained from treasure chests are better than those in the store.

I collect the fragmented cores from the golems and check whether or not there is a hidden door in the room where the girls are waiting.

I looked for one for about 30 minutes, but I couldn't find anything. I decided we'd go the opposite way this time.

「Horrible」

Just like in the other room from a while ago, there are decomposing corpses scattered around.

The causes of death are all different though. Where the bones had all been scattered in the room before, the cause of these deaths was a single arrow stuck to the head.

「Wait here a minute」

I determine the number and locations of the traps.

There are 10 traps altogether. Because all the bodies received an arrow and fell down, I'm able to determine that these traps are the same as the one from the entrance.

There isn't enough space for me to unsheath my weapon.

I step on the nearest traps deliberately, and catch the arrows that are fired at me.

Once the traps are triggered, they won't fire again for a while, so this passage is safe.

At the end of the passage I can see a room with an orc that is carrying a huge

sword standing inside it. It seems the orc is protecting the stairs that lead to the basement.

When I notice that it won't attack me even when it can see me, I think it'll be safe unless I enter the room.

Now, what should I do?

Because there's only one enemy, I can hold down the orc, and leave the attacking to the girls, but Celica's hammer is partially damaged after the fight with the golems.

Without a doubt, it will break after only one more blow. It would be better not to use the weapons we bought at a store in dungeons of this rank from now on.

I can put it in the item box and repair it with the repair command, but it will still break immediately even if I repair it.

That means Celica will have to sit this fight out, and while I distract the enemy, the other 3 girls can attack from outside the room with their ranged attacks.

I bring the 4 girls in, and after I hand another arrow to Mira, I tell them the strategy. Celica was a bit depressed when she heard the strategy, but this is the only way.

The same moment I enter the room, the orc prepares the large sword and attacks while roaring.

This time I won't use my swords.

While the orc rushes at me, I kick it lightly.

The orc is blown away, and releases its sword from the impact.

「Flame」

「Abyss!」

Sara and Charlotte attack the orc with magic.

However, the orc roars and deflects Charlotte's magic. Sara's fireball hits the orc, but he's not injured, so I kick him again.

Is this orc resistant to fire?

「Sara, different magic」

「Yes!」

I kick the orc another time, and while it tries to regain its composure from the impact, I pass the giant sword to Celica.

「Use this and be the vanguard with me」

「Eh, oh, yes!」

I found a good weapon, so Celica can fight as well. The sword is really big, but it should be okay if she holds it in both hands.

「Abyss!」

「Wind cutter」

Magic was released again, and the orc opened its mouth to roar and deflect the magic again, but this time, when the orc opened its mouth, an arrow pierced it.

The orc writhes in pain while the magic Sara had released cuts the orc, and Charlotte's magic drills the flesh out from its chest.

「Yaa!」

Celica stabs the orc in its wound with the big sword.

If it had still been moving after this, I was planning to finish it off myself, but it seems the orc died after the last blow.

The growth of the 4 girls is faster than I expected. I'll check everyone's status.

Sara Lv27 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Fire> Lv8
- Magic <Wind> Lv3
- Magic <Water> Lv1
- Detection Lv2

Mira Lv24 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic <Light> Lv1
- Cooking Lv3
- Bow Lv5
- Hawk Eye Lv5

Celia Lv26 Talent 8

Skills

- Blacksmithing Lv5
- Hammer Lv8
- Avoidance Lv3
- Big sword Lv2

Charlotte Alister Lv20 Talent 10

Skills

- Magic <Darkness> Lv4
- Flight Lv5
- Automatic recovery Lv1
- Grapple Lv1
- Avoidance Lv1
- Magic chanting Lv3

Their levels are rising quite a bit.

At this rate, I can let the girls handle more of the work.

Although we've acted together up until this point, why have none of the girls learned the [Discovery] or [Appraisal] skills?

Let's experiment with this a little.

「Ano, how do I dismantle this?」

「A lady like me doesn't need to see the dismantling of this pig」

That reminds me, what materials from the orc could I sell?

Let's ask Maria. Ah, the magic tool doesn't work in a dungeon. There's no signal. Can't be helped, let's stuff the whole corpse into the item box.

After I touch the corpse, it disappears, and I explain my magic to the surprised Celica and Charlotte.

While Celica was impressed, Charlotte didn't seem to be that convinced.

Even after I had explained it, Charlotte didn't look too impressed, and started to look around the room.

After confirming that there was nothing in the room, we decided to head down the stairs.

Chapter 11

After I reached the underground part of this dungeon, I used [Detection] and [Search] to look around. I don't know the structure of this basement, but the enemies were quite far. It seems the area is quite large.

There's a decent number of enemies, but there aren't any traps.

I tell Sara that she should use her [Detection] as much as possible to increase its level further, and afterwards, we all fall in line and advance.

After we had gone further in, we manage to spot an enemy. It's a Venomous Bat. It looks like a small, normal bat, and it seems weak at first glance, but its fangs have enough venom to kill a human in one bite.

Indeed, this might not be an enemy I can leave to the girls. Since they don't have [Abnormal State Immunity], I'll slice it in two with my sword... I put the corpse in the item box, and as we keep advancing I get a reaction from the [Search] skill.

When I place my hand on the wall that the skill has reacted to, I find out that there is a hidden door.

After I walk in, I can see a treasure chest sitting in the middle of the room. There doesn't seem to be any traps around it, so I casually open it.

– Sword of exorcism rank4
Durability 350/350
STR+32
Deals major damage to creatures of undead origins.

I didn't even put it in the item box, and yet I can see all its information. [Appraisal] leveled dramatically without me noticing. Is this the benefit of the [Growth] skill?

「Sara, this is for you」
「Eh, is that alright?」
「You're the only one who uses a sword」
「Thank you very much!」

I pass the sword to Sara and we all leave the room.

Along with Celica, who is equipped with the orc's greatsword, Sara can also become a vanguard. (Ed: changed the name to greatsword since it sounds better and is still a large sword. Name used to be "large sword")

There's a golem ahead.

Good, let's make him our practice partner.

「Everyone listen」

There's only one golem ahead, so I tell the girls to defeat it on their own. Because they've defeated a golem before, there doesn't seem to be any anxiety. I tell the girls a strategy they could use to defeat the golem.

Umm, I know I proposed this plan myself, but I'm still a little nervous.

「Wait, why are you going to the front!」

「Eei, annoying! Because you can't restrict its movement, I can't hit it!」

「Don't quarrel you tw-Kya!」

「Celica-san are you okay!?!」

As I had expected, this is a chaotic battle.

After the fighting had started, Celica and Sara became the vanguards. They were a well balanced party with Mira and Charlotte in the back.

The strategy was supposed to go like this: while Celica and Sara confined the golem, Charlotte and Mira were going to break the golem's core.

However, it was impossible for Sara to damage the golem with her physical strength, so as a result, the golem completely ignored Sara and focused entirely on Celica.

Celica can't attack while she's under attack, so because she was avoiding and parrying the attacks from the golem, she was left without a chance to attack. Since the golem hadn't had its moves restricted, it easily deflected Charlotte's magic.

The same happens for Mira. When she shoots an arrow at the golem, because its movements haven't been stopped, it can easily avoid the arrow.

Because the golem managed to avoid the arrow and magic another two times, Charlotte decides to run to the front. Celica was distracted by this, and was blown away. That's the current situation.

Celica, who was blown away, is safe and is being healed by Mira's magic. At this level they should be able to easily defeat the golem in front of them.

The problem is...

「You're in the way, move it!」

「You're the one that's in the way!」

These two are avoiding the golem's attacks while shouting at each other. To use magic you need to be able to focus, and since Charlotte and Sara are desperately avoiding the attacks, they aren't able to concentrate properly. Even if they sometimes manage to attack with their fists and sword, the golem takes very little damage. The little bit of damage it takes from Charlotte's fists is instantly healed, and the damage taken is 0. The attacks from Sara's sword don't even leave a scratch.

「It's over, huh?」

At this rate, they won't be able to beat the golem. It seems some special training is necessary after we leave the dungeon. I step between the golem and the two girls, and gouge out the core from its forehead.

「Don't fight」

「「This guy is in the wrong」」

Haa, these two...

Afterwards, I left those two quarrelling and head over to Celica and Mira.

「Are you okay, Celica?」

「Yes, I'm fine after Mira-chan's healing. Thank you, Mira-chan」

Mira seemed happy when Celica stroked her hair. I confirmed that Celica wasn't injured, and then I drag the two quarrelling girls over, and gather everyone in one place.

「From now on, I will defeat the enemies by myself」

From the fight with the golem, I saw that the girls are still lacking in power. Even though they all had sad looks, everyone nodded. It would be alright for everyone to fight if I was the vanguard, but their combat skills and experience won't rise if they rely on me. Everyone... especially Mira and Sara, needs to get stronger. Otherwise, their dream of world peace will stay as just a dream.

「After we leave the dungeon, you'll all have a mock battle against me」

After I said that, everyone's face somehow turned to despair.

「No, that's impossible!」

「If I receive Maika-san's attack my body will be split in two」

「Uu, I decided to give my life for Maika-san. To be killed by Maika-san...」

「Even a lady like myself will get hurt in a fight with a monster like yo-Ouch!?!」

So rude, watch your mouth.

I look back, and except for one falling person, everyone has an expression of relief.

Muu, am I really that scary?

I was gentle until now, so from now on let's try to be even more gentle.

Anyway, let's return to exploring this dungeon.

The enemies we've encountered so far were, the Venomous Bat, Golems, and an Orc. We've only seen these 3 so far. Combat is easier than I thought.

We found another set of stairs, but we still haven't explored the whole underground area, so we resume our search.

As a result,

– Poison Grass rank3

You will be poisoned if you eat it.

10 bundles

– Bracelet of power rank4

STR+11

I obtained these items from treasure chests. I gave the bracelet to Celica, and I'll use the Poison Grass for alchemy later.

Perhaps I can use this to make an Antidote Potion. The girls don't have the [Abnormal State Immunity] skill, so the sooner the better. When we leave the dungeon, I'll ask Maria about alchemy.

However, why hasn't this dungeon been cleared yet?

Honestly the level of the enemies is low, so if a party of moderate rank adventurers came here and they were careful of the traps, they could easily clear this dungeon.

While I'm thinking about such things, we descend the stairs and head further underground. Eventually we arrive near a door.
The door opens and closes.

... I discovered something amazing.

The moment I saw it, I understood why this dungeon hasn't been cleared yet. Until now I had thought that the guild must have been crazy to rank this dungeon as a 6.

I understand why now though. Probably, adventurers of rank 6 barely managed to get to this place. The dungeon's rank is determined by the rank of the weakest party that can return alive. When you say rank 6, that means a rank 6 adventurer made it to this place. Everyone returns after getting to this point. As a result, this dungeon still has yet to be cleared.

「Aren't we going to enter?」

「Un, it's better if you wait here」

This is bad. I can't take the girls in there.
I don't have the confidence to protect everyone while I'm fighting that.
In a more serious way than usual, I'll tell them not to go in without my permission.

「Sorry, you guys should all leave first」

I wonder if I conveyed my seriousness. Either way, the always moody Charlotte silently nodded.

The girls leave, so I open the door and take a look at him.

It's a black troll.

However, it's not the kind you often see in games.

Its height is approximately 10 meters, and it's 5 meters in width.
I've never seen such a huge troll in games before. (Ed: for those of you, like me, that use the Imperial System, 10 meters is about 33 feet. This thing is huge)
I understood its strength just by watching it, and I shiver with excitement.

「Fuu...」

I take a deep breath to calm my excitement.

The enemy seems to be quite dull. It still has yet to notice me.
If it's like this, I'll be able to finish this in one blow.

A sword in one hand.
I concentrate power to my feet.
And jump.
Aim at the neck.
The enemy is still unaware.
I swing my sword at its neck.
I feel its flesh on my sword.
It died.
I was convinced so.

「Ah?」

In the place that I had cut, a response was suddenly gone.
Soon, I found out what happened.
The sword broke.
That's when the troll noticed me.
The troll turned its head and looked me in the eyes.
Its ugly face is distorted.
At that moment, I jump back to distance myself from it.
However, the troll's attack did not end with just that.
The troll's club is swung at the wall, shattering it.
There aren't any more places to hide.
I have no choice other than to attack.
Before the shattered wall falls to the ground, I run at the troll with full speed.
The troll turned around.
I kick the ground and jump above the troll's head —

「Ha!」

— I use the high-speed, to rotate and gain momentum to turn and dive at the troll's head.

「Gwa!?!」

The troll screams and falls to the ground.

「Yes, I won!」

I didn't suffer much, but since having come to this world, this was, without a doubt, the hardest fight.

From now on we will fight such enemies. I only joined <<IDO>> because of its combat system. So, this was pretty fun.

I was careless.

Until now I had only been kicking my enemies, and because of that, something terrible has occurred.

「Eh?」

The troll's club approaches me from the left side.

I receive it with my left arm, and am sent flying into a wall.

Pain runs through my left arm.

My left arm is definitely broken.

However, at that moment [Automatic Recovery] activates. It heals my left arm completely. To heal an injury like that instantly... this skill is certainly a cheat as well.

However, the pain hasn't gone away.

While enduring severe pain in my left arm, I manage to grasp what happened.

The troll swung its club while it was face down.

At this rate, the troll is going to be getting up at any moment.

「—tsu!」

I run.

I kick the troll's face before it gets up.

I go behind the troll and kick it in the back of its head.

It rolls and crashes into a wall at the back of the room —

「This is troublesome」

— It stood up like nothing happened.

My kicks aren't having any effect.

Perhaps blunt attacks don't work against that troll?

Probably even the slash from the sword hadn't affected it at all... is it resistant to physical attacks?

Even if I happen to cut it with my sword, before I can deal a fatal wound, the sword will break.

Ever since I entered this room, the entrance has disappeared.
There's no exit.

「This is really bad」

There's only one skill that I can use to defeat the troll.
It's a skill that needs to use all of my STR and MP. It's a sword skill that affects all enemies within my line of sight, and ignores their resistances and defenses.
I am confident in this skill since it ignores defences.
However, there's a problem.
I have to maintain a pose for 10 seconds without moving.
Moreover, if I move, the skill fails and the MP will still be used. Because the HP of monsters in <<IDO>> is high while their defense is low, this skill isn't ever used.
However, this game has no concept of HP. If I can ignore the resistances, I should be able to kill it.
Hopefully it will still die if I cut it into pieces.
Since the wound of its neck hasn't healed, I know that the troll doesn't have [Automatic Recovery].
The problem is how I'll endure for 10 seconds.
I try to use [Coercion] to the max, but it doesn't seem to have worked.
There's only one way I can do this.

「Endure it」

I slap my cheeks and take a posture.
10, 9, the troll takes a swing.
8, the club breaks my left arm again. I grit my teeth and ignore the pain.
7, my left arm is healed.
6, the troll kicks me from the front.
5, my right arm, which is holding the sword, is broken. Some ribs also break in the process.
4, 3, my wounds are healed. The troll swings its club again.
2, the club arrives. It's aimed at my head this time. My head might be a slightly bad place to hit. My consciousness flies.
1, consciousness is back. I probably died at that moment. My head hurts like crazy. It would be bad if I really died, so let's say I just got dizzy. However ... it's finished.

0 —

「Mukage Issen」

— It flashes. However, that flash is actually a countless number of shadows, which destroys the enemy regardless of its defense.

Lines are inscribed into the troll's body. On its arm, foot, chest, head... there's a line inscribed everywhere on the troll's body, and... without a sound, without knowing what had happened, the troll's body separates into pieces and collapses.

After I saw this sight, I feel on my back.
I almost died. I mean, I certainly died once.
My whole body is painful. My consciousness is dim. My MP is empty, and my strength doesn't return. I can't move anymore.
Why was it here? To fight something like that in my first dungeon, is this because of that [Hero] skill as well?
It was fun though. To be able to fight such a powerful enemy, I should be thanking the [Hero] skill.

While I'm thinking about such things, the boss room is slowly filled with light. When I open my eyes, a sky comes into view.

In the end, I wasn't able to get any seasonings, huh.
Are, that being said, I heard a dungeon has a core, did I take it?

「Maika-san!?!」
「What happened!?!」
「You're covered in blood!?!」
「Nuoo, what the hell is this big monster!?!」

When I told everyone I was okay 「Where are you okay!」 I got scolded. I don't understand.
I have no wounds on my body, but because of the pain and fatigue, I can't move. Celica and Sara lend me their shoulders, and I touch the troll's corpse to put it in the item box.
That was my limit. My awareness is gradually fading.
Once we're finally in the carriage, I tell everyone my orders, and we head to the next town. My consciousness fades into darkness along the way.

Chapter 12

「xxxxxxxx」

There's nothing in the dark, but I can hear voices.
Ever since I fainted, I've heard a joyful voice around me.
I can't see the owner, and I can't determine whether it's a man or a woman from its voice.

It's speaking one-sidedly. I can't do anything in this darkness.
Eventually, the darkness dissolves, and I can see a faint light.
Ah, I'm waking up from a dream.

At the very least, I wanted to see who this nostalgic voice belonged to, but it doesn't seem to be possible.

The light becomes larger and larger, and then my consciousness surfaces.

「Bye bye, let's meet again!」

After I heard the voice speak to me for the last time, I woke up.

When I open my eyes, Charlotte's face is in full view.
I feel like I had a nice dream, but I can't remember what it was about.
Well, if I can't remember it, it was probably a trifling dream.

「What are you doing?」

「Nuowa!?!」

For the time being, I call out to Charlotte. Charlotte's face solidifies. It seems she's snapped out of it, and she rolls away on the floor.

「What are you doing?」

「I'm not doing anything! It's not like I was planning on licking the delicious blood on your face again!」

That reminds me, Charlotte really is a vampire, huh.
Is it natural for her to want to drink blood because she's a vampire?
While absently-mindedly thinking such, I take out a knife from the item box and go to slice my wrist.

「Wait, wait, wait! What the hell are you doing!?!」

「You want to drink blood, don't you?」

「Mugu~」

Because I put it in Charlotte's contract that she can't attack people selfishly, she can't drink blood from others.

Therefore, I have no choice but to let her drink mine.

I forgot about it until now. I'll pay more attention from now on.

「I have returned. Charlotte-chan, were you watching over Maika-san carefu...」

Just when I was about to slice open my wrist, Celica came back with vegetables in her hands.

「Maika-san what are you doing!?!」

「Charlotte wanted to drink my blood」

「I wouldn't even dream about it!」

After that, Celica took the knife from my hand and pushed me back into the bed.

Charlotte just likes blood. I was told that she won't die even if she doesn't drink it.

However, since she couldn't drink any even though she likes it, I'll secretly let her drink some later.

「Still, I'm very happy that you woke up」

「When you suddenly collapsed I thought you had died」

「Actually, I died once」

「That joke isn't funny」

I ain't kidding!

While chatting with the two girls, I properly discuss with them the purpose of our journey, and that I will listen to their wishes.

At the beginning, I had bought these two so that Mira and Sara could have some friends, but after going into the dungeon together, I got attached to them as well.

That's why I also want to grant these two their wishes.

After I explained why we were on this journey, I found out that when we had stayed at the expensive inn in the capital, these two had apparently already told the twins that they would cooperate.

Then, I'll ask them what their wishes are.

「I want to get stronger. At the moment this is my only wish. Therefore, this trip is convenient. It would be good if you worked hard for my sake」

「Un, I understand」

When I obediently answered, for some reason, Charlotte looked at me with weird eyes.

Did I say something funny?

「I'm the same as Mira-chan and Sara. I want to get stronger so I can help people in need」

Just what I had expected from Celica. She's a gentle child.
When I said 「Leave it to me」 Celica smiled happily.

When I asked Celica and Charlotte about our current situation, they said that we were about 100 kilometers south of the Imperial Capital. We're at an inn in the town of Aranda. It seems 2 days has passed since I collapsed.
In the meantime, they took turns nursing me and earning money to live off of by taking monster subjugation requests.

「I'm sorry」

「No, please don't apologize. You are always helping us」

「I'm just doing what I want to do」

「If that's the case, then we are just doing what we wanted too」

Uumu, when it's said like that, I can't talk back.
To do so much for someone like me though. I feel bad. Alright, let's do something for the girls later.

Celica told me to stay in bed for the rest of the day.
Because I haven't moved in a while, my body feels sluggish, so if possible I had wanted to exercise. I don't want to worry the girls anymore though, so I'll behave today.

Thinking about it, after defeating such a huge troll, everyone's level has probably risen quite a bit, so I take a look at everyone's status. Some skill levels have improved, but their levels didn't change that much.

I wonder why?

While thinking about such things, I remember that the entrance to that fight had disappeared after I entered the boss room.

That room was probably isolated from the outside, so that means what happens inside won't affect the outside?

I ask Charlotte if anything happened when they left the dungeon.

When she says nothing happened, even after that extreme battle I had, I'm convinced that my idea is correct.

In other words, if I go alone and defeat the boss, the experience only goes to the person that is in the boss room.

I don't think many of the bosses will be on the same level as that Troll, but when we come across another boss of that magnitude, fighting while trying to protect everyone would be impossible.

Basically, when everyone's level rises sufficiently, I will let the girls fight alone, and I'll only help them in boss rooms.

If so, everyone will be safe, and I'll be able to fight strong enemies.

However, even if the enemy is ridiculously strong, if I don't get any experience from it...

What should I do?

Mira and Sara returned from a request in the evening, and we all eat dinner together.

It's bland as usual. It looks like, after eating at that expensive inn, this is a disappointing taste for everyone.

I need to obtain some seasoning soon.

At dawn the next morning, we're all holding weapons at the outskirts of the town.

To exercise, we are going to have the mock battle I had promised them in the dungeon.

When I had told them about the mock battle, although at first they had sad looks on their faces, now they look serious.

In the 2 days I was down, they trained and subjugated monsters for requests.

Let's see how much they've grown.

The rules are simple. If I get hit, the girls win. If 10 minutes pass, or the girls are

no longer able to move, it's my win.

After the coin I flip falls to the ground, the battle will start.

The coin hits the ground.

「Flame」

At the same time she says that, a pillar of fire rises from the ground.

I dodged backwards to avoid the fire, and at that moment, the flying Charlotte finished casting [Abyss].

Did they prepare a strategy beforehand?

I won't say that it's cowardly. In fact, I'm pleased that they are taking this fight seriously.

「Sei」(せい)

From the side, as Celica swings her greatsword at me, Mira shoots an arrow that I grab with my bare hand.

Abyss is shot at me again, so I dodge and notice that Sara has vanished.

I activate [Detection] and sense someone behind me.

I kick off the ground and backflip behind Sara. Shortly after I do that, Sara appears and swings her sword at the place I had been standing just moments before.

If I'm not mistaken, was that Mira's light magic [Mirage]?

I understand how much their cooperation has increased just from this, but how about in a real fight?

I at least understand that everyone has gotten a lot better, so I'm happy. I guess I'll get a little serious.

「I came when you called, but what is with this situation?」

Maria looks at the 4 girls lying on the ground, and puts on a strained smile.

「It was just a small mock battle」

She was convinced by my words and looked at the 4 girls with sympathy in her eyes.

It's weird though. I don't think I was that serious.

「So, why did you call me here instead of going to the adventurer's guild?」

「It's big, so the guild isn't any good」

「？」

It will be faster to show her in person.

From the item box, I take out the orc's corpse, the golem's core, the venomous bat's corpse, and the troll's corpse. I haven't dismantled it since it looked like it'd be too much trouble. There isn't a concept of time in the item box, so the corpses are still fresh.

「So you were able to defeat that troll, huh. Even a party of rank 10 adventurers weren't able to defeat it」

Apparently, a dungeon boss with a higher rank than the dungeon itself is rare. Maria said it's meaningless to raise the level of the dungeon just because of its boss.

「How much will you pay for all this？」

「Let's see. It's rare for the golem's core to be intact so I will pay 8000 Gill for all? I don't know what the troll can be used for so I will reserve it for now」

I don't know if the prices are good, but it's alright either way.

I help place the corpses in a special item bag.

「Is it alright for me to come for the troll's corpse later? I will research what uses it may have. The club is too large for me to carry as well, so if you could hold on it for now, I'd be happy」

「I understand. Also, I have a request」

I ask Maria about alchemy. Then I ask her to provide an item bag for everyone, and for 2 katanas.

When I used that skill to kill the troll, the blades of the two swords disappeared. At the moment, I no longer have any weapons, so if I encounter another monster on the same level as that troll, I won't be able to do anything. That's why the swords are required immediately. 「Yes, I can teach you alchemy」 she promised to show me next time. However, I was told not to expect too much from the swords. It seems like craftsmen that can make a katana are rare.

I wanted to go into town and walk around until Maria returned, but these four are still lying motionless on the ground, so I will wait here until they recover. I'll do something about the troll's corpse in the meantime.

First of all, this club.

– Club of the Troll boss rank10

Durability 700/1000

STR+300

INT—300

Even after being swung with such force, this club still didn't break. Its durability is something special. The stats of this club are the best I've seen since I arrived in this world.

The problem is that it's so big and heavy that no one would be able to wield it.

When I lift it, I can feel its weight. It really is very heavy.

In conclusion, it's useless at the moment, so I'll find a use for it later.

Next is the corpse.

Well, even if I say corpse, all it consists of is meat and skin.

Let's try the meat. Un, it's disgusting.

Because the [Abnormal State Immunity] reacted, it seems the meat is poisonous.

This isn't usable. No, maybe it can be used for traps?

I'll get back to this later.

Next, the skin.

When I peel it from the meat and touch it, it's quite hard. It's not very pretty, but a high quality armor could be made out of this.

The problem is whether or not people can process it. Maria may be able to think of something at the very least.

During the dismantling of the Troll, the four girls somehow recovered.

Now, let's go look around town.

Chapter 13

「You can do anything, huh」

Maria, who saw my work, is looking at me with a big smile.

As she promised yesterday, Maria brought the swords, the alchemy set, and the item bags.

We are in one of the inn's rooms at the moment.

I'm playing with the alchemy set Maria brought... It was difficult in the beginning, but after using the set once, I learned the alchemy skill.

After I acquired the alchemy skill, I put the materials in the item box and I press the Alchemy button. It's completed instantly. Furthermore, after doing this process several times, the skill became lv100, so I can now make anything as long as I have the required materials.

I made the following items.

– Detoxification potion rank6

Quickly cures powerful poisons.

– Detoxification potion rank1

Can cure weak poisons.

I made 7 rank 1 Detoxification potions and 3 rank 6 potions.

As I had expected, I was able to make detox potions from the poison grass and antidote potions.

However, it was unexpected that the rank of the detox potion is determined by the rank of the antidote potion.

Maria told me that nobility and royalty will pay a lot of money for a rank 6 Detoxification potion, but I decided to save it for the girls.

However, I decided to give half of the rank 1 potions to Maria.

It's my way of thanks for the katanas. Speaking of which, these katanas are really poor quality.

Craftsmen are typically able to make better quality swords than this, but I had really wanted katanas.

「So, about the troll」

「That's right. Looks like the meat isn't usable, but the skin is. However, there are no craftsmen that can process it」

After all, the skin can't be processed, huh. Maria still wanted to buy the skin, so I forced the meat on her too.

「I don't need the meat though」

「It's troublesome to peel the skin away」

Maria received the skin, with the included meat, while looking unpleasant. The purchase amount is 310,000 Gill. I've made so much, that a normal person could live comfortably for a year off of this. After the journey ends, I'd like to possess more money than this state's budget.

After Maria had left, I went into the middle of the forest alone. The 4 girls are doing a request commissioned by the guild. At first I had wanted to go with them, but I want them to fight without having to rely on me, so, because the monsters in the vicinity of the town aren't that strong, I decided that it's alright to let them go alone. However, I'm worried about one thing. I used [Detection] to its fullest while in the town, and found about 200 goblins in the middle of the forest. I came here to expel them. Honestly, I wouldn't mind if the goblins attacked the town, but if they do, the girls will be sad. Besides, I'd be forced to fight them anyway if they did attack the town.

Is this an event influenced by the [Hero] skill as well?

When I reach the middle of the forest, I confirm the location of the goblin settlement, and use [Coercion].

Just like when a frog sees a snake, the goblins froze in their tracks.

When exterminating small fry, intimidation skills are very useful.

I didn't use it that much though.

This is an easy task. I'm just snapping their necks one by one while they're frozen.

In less than a few minutes I finished exterminating the horde of goblins.

「He-Help me please」

There was a man, surrounded by goblins, in the middle of the village. He grimaced in fear and had tears in his eyes and a runny nose after seeing me.

A man surrounded by goblins. Frightened for his life.

That he did not die from my [Coercion] skill, means that he is no ordinary man.

An ordinary person can't survive my [Coercion].

Adventurer? Goblin? His face looks goblin-like.

「I, I was attacked by the goblins...」

Well, it doesn't matter. The [Detection] skill identifies him as an enemy.

The man was yelling something, but I didn't pay it any mind and wanted to cut his head off, but I soon gave up on the idea.

I have yet to fight with adventurers of this world.

I may be able to experience the might of the adventurers of this world for the first time.

I don't know what level this man is, but to be able to withstand my maximum [Coercion], he should be fairly high level.

「If you win, I will overlook this」

「... Eh?」

The man doesn't have a weapon, so I take Sara's old sword from the item box and toss it to the man.

The man looks confused. He looks back and forth between me and the sword, and as I urge him to take the sword with my eyes, he finally takes the weapon and enters a fighting stance.

However, his body is trembling. It looks like he will collapse at any moment.

「I'll only use my left arm, and I won't move from this spot」

「u, uooooo!!」

It won't be a battle unless I do something, so I might as well give him a handicap. While giving a courageous shout, the man finally decides to attack, so the man raised the sword and waved it around.

A little faster than the girls?

I raise my fist and punch the approaching man's chest lightly.

I had hit lightly, because I thought he would be sent flying otherwise, but my fist sinks into the left side of his chest. I hear his bones crack, and the man is sent flying. After that, he did not get back on his feet.

「So weak...」

I thought it would be good fight with the handicap, but it looks like I had expected too much. I'm disappointed.

I approach the dead body of the man, and look through his clothes to find his guild card.

The guild card was rank 5. If his rank was 5, then the adventurers of this world are really weak. However, I heard that the adventurers rank 8 and above are in another world compared to the lower ranked adventurers. Let's fight them next time.

For now, let's do something about this mountain of corpses.

First of all...

「Alright, I will impose on Maria」

Maria is handy in times like these. Even though there is a lot of material, I don't know what the goblins can be used for.

Maria came to the forest about 10 minutes after I had contacted her.

「You're slow」

「Even though I rushed here」

Maria looks around, and at the bottom of the mountain of corpses, she sees a man's body.

「Acquaintance?」

「No, I've only seen his face before. It's strange though, what was this man doing in such a place? I'm sure he was last seen at the borders of Midgard Kingdom」

According to Maria, this man is a criminal who has a bounty on his head, and has the special ability to control goblins. With this ability, various towns and villages were attacked.

Does his face resemble a goblin because of this ability? No, maybe because his face resembles a goblin, he got such an ability.

「You will receive a reward if you report this to the Knight's Order. What will you do?」

「I don't need it. The goblins are for free as well」

The Knight's Order or nobility, being related to such organisations would only be troublesome.

「I don't need goblins either...」 was ignored. The clean-up was left to Maria, and I returned to the town.

「Ah, welcome back」

When I returned to the inn, the girls had already returned.
Good timing. I hand out an item bag to everyone.
It will become much easier for everyone to carry materials now, so the girls are happy.

「Speaking of which, when are you planing on leaving this town?」
「Tomorrow morning」

My words surprise everyone.
I myself think that it's a sudden departure, but with the things that have been happening, I feel like a lot of troublesome events will happen if I stay here, so it would be better not to stay in one place for a long time.

Ah, that right.

「I'll give you all some money」

I transfer some money from my guild card to everyone's guild card.
Suddenly, a large amount of money is transferred to their guild cards. Everyone except Charlotte is surprised.
Well, if you suddenly receive so much money you would be surprised.
I explain to everyone, that if I hog all the money and lose my consciousness again, the girls would be in trouble.
Apparently, everyone is convinced by this.
After that, we prepared the things we'd need for the journey, ate dinner, and went to bed early.

That night, I make sure that everyone is asleep and leave the inn.
It's around 3 in the morning, and the town was creepily silent. I'm sleepy.
Sound echoes around, but the only things I can hear are the howling of dogs and some galloping sounds from far away.
My destination is the outskirts of the town where we held our mock battle.
Just before leaving, what kind of event will happen I wonder.
Is this the influence of the [Hero] skill? Heroes are really troublesome. Why do I have to be a hero...

This must be the work of those three that were summoned by king.

「I've arrived」

I used my [Detection] skill and sensed enemies nearby.

I look at the enemy and frown unconsciously.

「The skill displayed ??? so I didn't know what it meant, but it meant this, huh」

It has a countless number of legs, countless hands grow from its body, and many people's faces are everywhere. It was a creepy monster that had been created from dozens of people.

It was made by someone. Most likely it has no name because of this. Then, I can understand the funny reaction I got from [Detection].

Moreover, I'm surprised that the people this monster was created from are all still alive.

A magic square is drawn on its body. I can't sense any other presences with [Detection] so it's probably being controlled from far away.

Really, if this magician is strong enough to create something like this, he should go and conquer some dungeons instead.

「Whew」

I take a deep breath and kick the monster's torso.

The monster is quite tough. Although it was sent tens of meters away, it still did not fall.

No, when I kicked the monster, one of the people it had been created from died, so it must have been effective.

When the other people saw the dead person, they started to scream resentments one after the other.

It was noisy so I used my [Coercion] on max to shut them up, but it wasn't effective.

The skill is useful for small fry, but it has no effect on this monster. It seems this thing is quite strong.

The monster approaches me at a speed that doesn't match its huge body. It's a pretty slow speed for me though.

I counter the monster charging at me with a kick.

The monster doesn't learn, and charges at me once again.

It repeats the charge without ever learning a lesson over and over again.
It looks like its only attack is its charge.

By any chance, does this monster lack intelligence?

It appears to be that my idea was right. It hasn't stopped attacking me with a charge.

I destroy its materials one by one after every charge.

After dozens of charges later, all the materials are dead and the monster stopped moving. (Ed: She considers people to be mere materials for a monster ... respect Maika-san. Respect)

I thought it had died, but something is strange.

The monster's body starts to grow little by little...

「Batter up」 (Ed: Used to say "First" but I don't get the reference (if there is any), so I changed it to this due to the next line)

If I'm thinking about this correctly, this will become a catastrophe if it continues, so although I'm flustered, I bring the troll's club from out of the item box, and take the pose of a pro baseball player.

「Whew」

I take a swing and send the body flying far away into the distance.

Eventually, I spot a huge mushroom cloud, and I can hear a roaring sound in the distance.

「That was dangerous」

I was in the nick of time. Without a doubt, that explosion would have hit the town if it had exploded here.

I don't care about the people of the town, but it would be bad if the explosion had hit the girls. It's a good thing I made it in time.

Before people spot me, I secretly return to the inn using the [Stealth] skill.

I don't know why that monster was sent to this town.

However, if it was because of the [Hero] skill, a lot of troublesome things will happen from now on.

Chapter 14

「Haa」

Sara finished off the remaining muscle mushroom.
With this, all of the monsters in this room have been subjugated.

「Good job」

I put the corpses of the scattered enemies around the room into the item box.
After the battle, although everyone is dead tired, they are all smiling joyfully after hearing my words.

It's been 3 days since we left the Town of Aranda. Currently, we're located about 60 kilometers east of the town, in a rank 4 dungeon.
Because a dungeon of this rank can be cleared by ordinary adventurers, I could easily clear it by myself. However, since I suggested that the girls should clear it by themselves, I'm currently being "carried" through.
This dungeon is based on clearing rooms of monsters. After you enter a room, you have to kill all the monsters there, and then the door to the next room will open. It's a different room every time.
Furthermore, the monsters in the next room are stronger than the monsters in the current room.

Currently, we are in the 8th room. So far, as a result of continuous fighting, the girls have accumulated a lot of fatigue.

However, this dungeon won't let you take a break.

You have to enter the next room within 3 minutes of completing the current room, or you will be thrown out of the dungeon. After conquering the 5th floor, the girls experienced this phenomena on their own. They took a break because of the fatigue, and were thrown out of the dungeon. They had to start all over from the beginning again.

「Should I do the next room?」

「No. Maika-san, please watch us from behind」

「I don't need your help with a dungeon of this rank!」

Muu, these past few days nobody has relied on me. I feel lonely.

All of the monsters we've encountered so far were defeated by the girls. Ever since we entered this dungeon, all I've been doing is collecting the corpses. Everyone is fighting desperately, and I'm just picking up corpses. I feel a little empty inside.

「Ano, Maika-san... Maika-san can use alchemy, right? Can you make some potions that recover stamina by any chance?」

「Wait a minute」

After Mira's question, I opened the system screen and looked at the list of potions I could create.

I will honestly die in this dungeon if I don't do something.

In addition, this is the first time I'm being relied on in a while. I must be useful.

I look look through the list and search for what I want.

I look, look some more, and look even more... I don't have enough material.

「P-please don't be depressed!」

「That's right. Maika-san helps us enough by watching over us!」

「Un, thank you」

Aa, my heart is touched by the kindness of Celica and Mira.

「Oi, how long are you going to stay like that. If we don't hurry, we'll be thrown out again」

Oh yes, that's right. I can't be depressed forever.

Waiting for us in the next room we enter, there are 4 lizardmen.

These 4 lizardmen are nothing but small fries before my eyes, but for the 4 fatigued girls they may end up being difficult enemies.

Is it finally my turn?

「Alright, it's my tur...」

「Maika-san please stay there」

What caused this I wonder. I feel like over these last few days everyone has lost their hesitation towards me. In particular, it looks like Mira, who was the most afraid of me at first, had just been acting scared the entire time.

Well, I allowed them this much so I'm little happy.

I want them to depend on me more though, but eventually they'll be able to live

without me. If everyone wished for their freedom I don't know what I'd do. Let's lock these feelings deep within my chest.

「Onee-chan, you take on the right one. Celica-san, you take the left one. Charlotte-chan, please support them with you magic」

「Ou」

「I understand」

「Roger that」

Just like Mira commanded, Sara attacks the lizardman on the right, while Celica attacks the one on the left.

The other 2 lizardmen that were left alone are on their way to help the lizardmen that were under attack but — —

「Nightmare!」

—— They are attacked by Charlotte's magic.

Tentacles appear from their shadows and restrict the movement of the 2 lizardmen.

At that same moment, Mira shoots an arrow towards the head of the immobilized lizardman.

「This lady is also heading to the front!」

「Yes, please do so」

One of the remaining lizardmen was killed by Mira's arrow, while Charlotte punches the head of the second one. Charlotte then surprises the lizardman Sara was fighting against from behind.

The lizardman was attacked by two girls relentlessly, and Sara manages to cut its head off.

After finishing off three of the lizardmen, the girls rally with Celica. The lizardman's sword breaks, and Celica deals the finishing blow.

It was an overwhelming victory.

It looks like the girls won't have any troubles with any enemies at this level.

Everyone is growing faster than I had expected.

If their growth continues going the way it is, they'll be able to clear a high rank dungeon soon.

If that's the case, what will I do?

We open the door to the next room.
There is a single golem in the shape of a knight.
The last time we were here, the 4 were disappointed because they weren't able to defeat this enemy.
With that same enemy before their eyes, the girls look nervous.
I thought it would finally be my time to shine, but the girls don't seem to have given up yet.
In fact, now they're staring at the golem with eyes that say, "I will get my revenge on you".
Looking at this scene, I decided that I'll refrain from entering this battle.

「Let's go. Celica-san, you're the vanguard. Onee-chan use [Wind Cutter]. Charlotte-chan please use [Nightmare]」

After Mira finishes giving her orders, Celica steps to the front with her large sword, Sara starts to concentrate on her magic, and Charlotte starts chanting.

「Yaa」

Celica attacks the golem. She doesn't lose to it in strength like the last time they clashed. Actually, Celica now has even more strength than the golem does.

「Nightmare!」

「Wind cutter」

「Mirage」

Charlotte's, Sara's, and Mira's magic flies towards the golem. The tentacles produced by Charlotte's magic stops the movements of the golem's lower half. The golem tries to avoid Sara's magic, but Mira's Mirage magic hides the Wind Cutter, and its movements have already been sealed by Nightmare anyway. Even though the golem can't see the magic, it's not like the magic was dispelled, so the magic struck the core directly and the golem's movement was slowed. A big crack forms on the core.

Celica took this chance to swing her sword at the core, and completely destroys it.

To defeat the golem this easily, I'm surprised.

「Everyone has become really strong」

After the battle, I told them my honest opinion, and the girls flushed red in

embarrassed from my praise.

「After that time Maika-san fell unconscious, we decided on this together. We can't save the world if we are merely baggage to Maika-san. We wanted to show you that we can capture a dungeon on our own, but we are still weak」

「We are Maika-san's slaves, so it's proper for us to work hard for our master's sake. I also want to repay the Maika-san who got me out of that cage」

「We know that Maika-san does a lot for us. We also want to help Maika-san, but the only thing we can do is to get stronger ourselves」

「Maa, that's why. You're the only one who can defeat something like that stupid big troll from before. You're strong, so you can leave the small fries to us. Maa, I will soon overtake you though」

After hearing the words of Sara, Celica, Mira, and Charlotte, my chest becomes hot.

I want to protect these children. However, these children say that they want to be useful to me, and they want to be able to capture dungeons on their own. That's dangerous. Honestly, I want them to follow me from behind for a while. That way I can protect them directly.

However, these children doesn't want that. I can force them to follow my orders, but I don't want to do that. I want to let these children do what they want to do. I don't want to get in their way.

Then, the things I must do consist of reducing the danger these girls will face, offering them the most support I can, and destroying any enemies the girls can't take on by themselves.

「I understand. But promise me this one thing. Never overdo it」

「「「Yes」」」

「Ou」

With that decided, once we leave this dungeon, let's learn some production skills with everyone.

Ah, but we don't have enough materials. It seems I need to ask Maria about the locations of the high-ranking dungeons.

It will be busier from now on.

Since we defeated the golem, we entered the next room. The room was quite small, and it had a blue shining crystal in the centre of it.

Apparently, this is the core of the dungeon.

When I collect the core, the dungeon starts to disintegrate into light particles and fades away.

Everyone voices their admiration of this spectacular event.

That reminds me, did the dungeon disappear when I took the troll with me? Let's ask Maria later.

I was thinking about such things while watching this scene.

Chapter 15

「It's so hot...」

After I heard this declaration from everyone, I decided that tomorrow I would dive into the dungeon alone.

I had called Maria a while ago, and she had brought me the production tools and dungeon locations that I would need.

I also asked about the dungeon's core, but it looks like this is the first time she's heard about a dungeon without a core. Well, I was only a little curious. If she doesn't know, then there's no real need to think about it that hard.

According to the map I had received from Maria, there was a rank 10 dungeon nearby, so I was planning on capturing it with everyone, but the girls didn't want to drag me down, so they decided to wait outside.

When I think about it now, they made the right decision.

This dungeon is full of lava, and it's incredibly hot. The moment a drop of sweat appears, it instantly evaporates.

I can endure this heat, but the others would surely have dried up after several minutes.

Rank 10 dungeons are special. The rank of other dungeons is decided by the rank of the adventurers that can barely survive there, but in a rank 10 dungeon there is no guarantee that you will return alive. The rank is decided like that.

So, there has yet to be anyone that has successfully captured a rank 10 dungeon.

Maa, that can also be said about rank 9 dungeons as well though.

Basically, it's impossible for people of this world to capture a dungeon of these two ranks.

「It came again」

From the magma, an enemy that I'm already familiar with appeared. The only enemy that I've seen on this level so far is this Flaming snake. It has resistance to physical attacks, and because I only have physical attacks, the only thing I can do is run away.

Fortunately, its movement speed is low, so running away is not difficult, but they appear often.

Because I encounter this guy every 10 steps I take, I came to hate seeing it.

「At last, I found it」

The reason I haven't immediately made my descent to a lower level is because I'm in this dungeon to collect all the treasure chests.

This dungeon is pointlessly wide, so exploring takes time.

Besides, ever since I've entered this dungeon, the radius of the [Detection] and [Search] skills have significantly dropped, so I don't know what lurks near the treasures.

It seems all rank 9 and 10 dungeons are like this.

「What's this, a book?」

When I open the treasure chest, an old book lies inside. When I appraise the book it says: Magic – Skill book of fire. When I take a look at the skills, it seems I've learned fire magic.

Of course I read it. Because I can only use physical attacks right now, I really wanted to have a few attacks of a different nature.

This skill book must definitely be a gift from heavens. However, I wonder if fire elemental magic can even hurt the monsters in this dungeon.

After I finished reading the book, it disappeared.

I verify that I've learned all the skills I could, and use one as a test.

「Flame」

A column of fire appeared from the magic square on the ground.

Are? That's strange. What appeared wasn't a column of fire, but rather, it looked more like a laser.

When Sara uses this magic, at most a 2 meter high column of fire appears.

Perhaps the power of the spell depends on the INT value?

Is this safe to use in such a narrow cave? I don't want this cave to collapse and bury me alive.

For now, let's head towards the unexplored areas.

After walking for a while, I've arrived at the next location.

I'm getting a reaction from below the magma... What am I supposed to do here?

I try to throw in the body of the lizardman we had hunted yesterday.

Un, even the bones melted in an instant.

For starters, let's try throwing the item with the most durability in. The troll's club.

It seems durable enough to withstand the heat if I fully repair it.

I put it in the item box and select the repair command. I repeat the process until its durability is maxed out. This body is definitely a cheat, but the real cheat is this system screen.

I take out the club and set myself up for a golf swing — —

「Fuu」

— — the magma is gouged out and quickly put in the item box.

I quickly jump into the void left over in order to open the treasure chest.

It's good that I was able to jump in but...

「No matter how I look at it, it's way too hot to touch」

It was surrounded by magma until just a few moments ago, so it may be better not to touch it with my bare hands.

I'm prepared to open it even if my hands melt in the process, but even though my hands will recover, I will still feel the pain. I'm not a masochist, so I'm not interested in receiving pain outside of combat.

Again, I take out the corpse of a lizardman, and I quickly use the lizard's hand to unlock the treasure chest before the hand melts.

After I opened the treasure chest, I tossed the lizard back into my item box.

There are two crystal balls inside the chest.

— Transfer Crystal rank 9

2 in 1. A magic tool to transfer the person touching the crystal to another crystal.

I wonder if these crystals are compatible with Maria's crystal.

Maria's crystal allows her to travel freely.

I'll keep one of these, and give the other one to someone from the group.

Next up is...

「It came again」

The Flame Snake approaches me again, but this time a group of them appeared in the entrance.

There's no other way but to run through them.

The Flaming Snakes envelop my body, but heat of only this degree can't do anything to me.

However, my clothes aren't safe, so I don't want to stay inside the snakes' bodies for too long.

I began searching this dungeon an hour ago, but I wasn't able to cover even half of it.

I'm thirsty. Is magma drinkable?

While thinking about such reckless things, I had a reaction from the [Detection] skill.

The reaction is coming from the wall to my right. Because the reaction wasn't from [Search], but from [Detection], I can assume the item is a production material.

I dig into the wall with a pickaxe.

After I had swung several times, I hit something solid.

I take it out bare handed. Its hot, but I endure it.

– Combustion stone rank 7

It's a stone that emits a high heat. When I touched it directly, I suffered severe burns.

Oo, I picked up something good.

I can use this for blacksmithing or cooking.

Because there are still reactions coming from this wall, I gather everything.

As a result, I've got 12 Combustion Stones altogether.

After I leave this dungeon, let's immediately make a weapon.

Nearly 2 hours have passed since I found the Combustion Stones.

After that, besides getting attacked by Flaming Snakes several times, nothing else has happened. I've made it to the place that shows where the next level is on the map.

I got a response from [Detection] and [Search] earlier.

There's an enemy and a treasure chest up ahead.

My mood is gradually uplifted.

After all, for the first time, an enemy that is not a Flaming Snake stands before me. Moreover, it's an enemy that carries the name, Red Dragon.

My mood is improving after finding such a powerful enemy.

Before me stands about a 5 meter long giant red lizard.
It isn't dragon, it's a lizard.
I was hoping for a dragon from fantasy, so I'm kinda disappointed.
Maa, it'll be fine if it's strong.

I rush towards the Red Dragon. In return, the lizard opens its mouth and unleashes a flash of scorching heat.
I dodge the flash and close the distance between us.
However, this lizard is unexpectedly quick and manages to dodge my attack.
I swing at the ground where the lizard was standing just moments before. I quickly recover, jump into the air, and hammer kick its back.
The lizard screams in pain while it falls to the ground.
As expected, it didn't instantly die from this, but the lizard is dying due to the intense pain while still trying to stand.
Apparently, this lizard doesn't seem to be that strong.
This is rank 10 dungeon, so I had expected opponents on the same level as that troll. I'm disappointed.
If an enemy as strong as the troll appeared, I wonder, just how much fun would I have?
I finish off the dying lizard.
I throw the lizard just as it is into the item box, and open the treasure chest it guarded.

「Here we go」

Seeing the contents, I immediately make a victory pose.
It was packed with curry roux. The real question is why it was full of curry roux, but I finally got a seasoning, so it's a trifling matter.
I close the chest and try to see if I can put it in my item box.
– Treasure chest filled with Curry Roux x1
It seems to be OK.
With this, let's declare today's exploration done.
I explored only the first floor, but after this much heat my throat is dry.
I'll explore the second floor tomorrow.

After walking back outside, I inhale the fresh air. Fresh air courses through my body once again.

「Ah, welcome back. How did it go?」

After being welcomed, I told Mira how it went.
On the way back, I hand her the Transfer Crystal.
With this, we can reach each other no matter where we are.

「Did something happen here?」

「No, we only exterminated some nearby monsters. Nothing else happened」

That's good.

I tell Mira that I'll cook today's dinner.

Having curry after such a long time. It's somewhat lonely without the rice, but
I'm still happy.

What would happen to the adventurers of this world if they entered this
dungeon?

Rank 1 ~ 6: Will dry up within a minute and die.

Rank 7、8: Will survive for 5 minutes if not attacked by a Flaming Snake.

Rank 9、10: Will survive for 10 minutes if not attacked by a Flaming Snake.

Chapter 16

「Delicious」

「Amazing, Maika-san, this is delicious. Please teach me how to make this next time」

「I'm so happy that I can eat such delicious food」

「Delicious, this is delicious!」

After tasting the curry, I got these reactions.

My first curry was well-received.

For some reason, the vegetables of this world are almost all the same, so I was able to cook a curry similar to the one from Earth. I'm satisfied.

The only difference between the two is the type of meat.

In Japan, I would use pork or beef, and sometimes even some chicken meat, but there's no such meat here, so I ended up using Red Dragon meat instead.

It's excellent. As expected of a monster from the highest ranked dungeon, I've never tasted such a delicious meat before.

There was also another discovery.

When I took the Curry Roux out from the treasure chest, put the chest back into the item box, and once again took the chest out, the chest was once again full of Curry Roux.

This is probably because, when I put the treasure chest into the item box for the first time, the item box named the chest the "Treasure Chest filled with Curry Roux" and it "fixed" the chest when it was emptied.

In other words, every time I take out the treasure chest from the item box, it's filled to the top with curry roux.

Tomorrow, let's test this to see if it's only possible with treasure chests.

After we finish eating dinner, I check my blacksmithing list to see if there's anything I can make from the Combustion Stones I got in the dungeon.

In the end, I made a sword with Combustion stones and Red Dragon fangs.

– Burning Sword rank 8

Durability 700／700

STR+115

Increases damage done to insect and plant type enemies.

I used 5 Combustion Stones and 8 Red Dragon Fangs to make this sword with a crimson color. There shouldn't be many people with a sword of such rank.

– Burning Claw rank 8

Durability 700／700

STR+100

Increases damage done to insect and plant type enemies.

There isn't anyone who uses a claw weapon, but I made one for Charlotte just in case.

「Here, this is for you」

「Eh, is that really alright?」

I hand the sword, which I had just created in the tent, to Sara, which she received with quite the surprised expression.

Why are you so surprised? The only one who uses a sword is Sara, so of course she's the one who would receive it.

「Well, but the sword I have is good enough for me」

「Just in case your sword breaks, it's better to have a backup or two right?」

I persuade Sara to take the sword.

Was there such a need to be so afraid?

「This sword is most likely on an entirely different level than the ones used by a knight commander or royalty. Is it really alright for me to receive such sword?」

She went somewhere with an unpleasant face while mumbling something, but I'm glad she accepted the sword.

Afterwards, I talk to Charlotte, who is lying in the carriage because she ate too much.

「Mu, this is for me? I'm sure I told you that a lady like myself doesn't require a weapon」

「Just in case. If you don't need it, you can sell it」

「... You leave me no choice, I will accept it. However, don't expect any gratitude」

「Un, thank you」

「Why the hell are you saying thanks」

Charlotte looks the other way.

I was worried that she wouldn't take it, but I'm glad she received it properly. I would prefer it if she used it instead of selling it, but I will leave that up to her.

The next morning, I once again dive into the dungeon alone. Everyone else stays at home.

I also thought about this yesterday, but I can't help but feel anxious about leaving the four of them alone.

However, even if I'm being selfish, I'm the master, so those four have to listen to my orders. When this happens, and I'm going into high ranking dungeon by myself, the four blame themselves for being weak.

Everyone became quite strong, so they won't lose to the monsters around town. However, I'm still worried about them. I'll return as soon as possible.

On the first floor, I searched the collection points and treasure chest locations that I had discovered yesterday, but I didn't find anything. Seems like they don't respawn in a day.

I decided to hunt a few Red Dragons and proceed to the second floor.

When I got to the second floor, I experienced the biggest change I've ever seen in a dungeon so far.

There's still boiling magma around, just like on the first floor, but for some reason, huge red flowers bloom here.

Furthermore, the same kind of flower also blooms closely on the ceiling. They are so packed together, that there are no gaps in between them.

My detection skills react to these flowers, are they all monsters?

Honestly, it would be troublesome to take on such a large number of enemies that don't move, so I thought I would leave them be and explore but...

「Maa, that's not possible, is it?」

As soon as I set foot on the second floor, the flowers blew fire at me all at once.

Because it would be a problem if my clothes caught on fire, I rush back to the stairs.

As soon as I return to the stairway, the flowers stop their attack. Their petals close and they return to their state as a bud.

This is a troublesome situation.

Because the flowers are tightly packed together, there doesn't seem to be a gap a person could pass through.

If I advance, even though I won't take any damage, my clothes are ordinary clothing and would burn, so this won't be easy.

I bought these clothes in a town, but then I learned the sewing skill, so I still have some clothes available.

However, because it would be a waste, I don't want them to get burned.

Moreover, advancing across those flowers, while being under bombardment would seem to be a bit too hot aswell.

Isn't there anything I can do?

「Ah, that's right」

I use [Coercion] to the max, and step onto the second floor once again.

... Un. I think it's okay.

With an intimidating skill on, the flowers won't attack me.

It didn't work on the Flaming Snakes, so I wasn't sure if it would be effective. It's good that it works.

Although there are many flowers, it seems that they are not a strong monster.

Now then, let's explore the second floor while picking a few flowers.

This dungeon's second floor can boast the same size as the first floor.

There weren't any enemies aside from the flowers, so exploring this floor is easy, but this floor is so large that it's bothersome.

My [Detection] and [Search] skills are always on, so every corner of the dungeon is thoroughly searched.

I stand in front of the hidden door I found during the search.

The [Detection] skill reacts to it, so there's an enemy inside. Its name is displayed as ??? so I don't know what type of enemy it is.

I don't know whether the enemy behind this hidden door is strong or not, so let's be careful.

After I carefully entered the hidden door, I notice this room was much wider than the one I was in before.

In the center of the room stands 1 full set of body armor. There's nobody inside, just an empty set of armor.

Suddenly, the armor starts to transmit an aura.

This armor is quite strong. Maybe even stronger than the troll.

I draw only one of my katanas.

The armor was sitting seiza, but when I pulled out the katana, it stood up and drew its own katana.

After the armor drew its katana, I thought it would be a waste to draw the second one. I have that kind of feeling.

「――tsu!？」

At that moment, I kick off the ground to avoid the katana that was aiming at my neck.

The armor did not move from its spot.

Yet, I certainly felt a katana aiming at my neck.

Is an ultra high-speed slash possible? Was the space around me cut, or was it only a slash from the katana?

Which ever it was, it doesn't change the fact that this is troublesome.

Even worse is the fact that when the armor unsheathed it's katana, I almost didn't see it.

Thanks to the [Perception] skill, I could barely see the katana move and was able to avoid the attack, but still, the attack itself was invisible and it made evading it difficult.

「Gu」

The katana blurred again. I rolled away to dodge the slash.

「Air blade!」

After rolling away, I took a posture and used one of my sword skills, and unleashed an air blade.

However, just when I think I see the its katana blur again, a sound of clashing metal echoes around the room. The air blade I used vanished.

Meanwhile I put some distance between the two of us.

Then, an attack that aimed for my neck was unleashed again. I couldn't see the invisible attack, but I managed to evade it thanks to perception, and I closed the distance between us.

Perhaps that slashing attack cannot be used while moving.

If it used the attack continuously, I would have to avoid it by rolling, and then I wouldn't be able to do any attacks of my own.

However, that armor didn't do it.

There are about one or two seconds between each attack.

Even that small amount of time is enough for me.

I cover about 10 meters with one step.

「Thunder!」

It's my fastest sword skill, a thunder-type skill that allows me to approach the armor at a lightning fast speed.

It doesn't have a neck, so I aim at the torso.

However — — It doesn't reach.

A high pitched sound echoes around. The our katanas collided.

「Thunder Strike」

I unsheathed my other katana.

When I landed the attack, the armor's katana is flung away.

Now it has nothing to block my attacks with.

I break the armor with Thunder Strike.

「That was dangerous」

My arm that was cut off grows back while I mumble.

When I used the first Thunder strike, it used its invisible slash and cut off the arm that held the katana.

If I had been just a second slower, it may not ended with just an arm.

Because it was very dangerous to have taken that slash from so close, I'm glad it was defeated with this.

I pick up its katana from off the ground.

When I used Thunder Strike, the second katana had vanished. It seems I'm going one sword style for the rest of the day.

Maa, this katana is of the highest rank, so I don't need to worry.

I mean, to begin with, I barely fought it with my 2 swords.

After all, my fights were usually finished bare handed. It won't be problem to use only 1 sword.

– The demon sword – Muramasa rank 10

Durability 1 000／1 000

STR+420

AGI+270

Puts the wielder under a 『curse』.

Fumu, a curse.

Because of my [Abnormal State Immunity], the curse doesn't work on me.

I don't know what curse this is, but the curse must be fairly strong because of this katana's rank. It wouldn't be possible for anyone besides me to use this katana.

I appraised the armor, but it was poor quality armor you could find at any market.

I thought the armor might have been high quality, so I'm kinda disappointed.

Perhaps the curse on the sword controlled the armor?

Just in case the armor is useful for something, I pick it up anyway.

Now, it doesn't seem like anything else is in this room, so let's continue exploring.

Chapter 17

Changed skill names

Thunder Strike > Narukami

Air blade > Kūjin

2 hours have passed since I began exploring the second floor.

During this period, since my coercion skill has always been on, enemies aren't attacking me. Searching became a lot easier this way.

「Ah, it's appeared again」

I've seen this face more times than the faces of my own parents. I feel tired just by looking at it.

Maa, I don't really remember my parent's faces. My parents were creeped out by me and never approached, and I wasn't interested in talking with them either.

「Narukami」

I try to cut it down with a sword skill.

Narukami is supposed to be a thunder element attack, yet it didn't have any effect.

... Un, this is impossible. No matter how much of a cheat I am, there are still a few things I can't do.

I avoid the flame, which the snake spits out, and run away at full speed.

The snakes never appeared while I was in the first half of the floor, but the moment I stepped into the second half, they started showing up like cockroaches.

The whole place is now overflowing with flowers and snakes.

I would be happy if Coercion worked on the snakes, but reality is not so sweet.

「Oops」

As I run through the dungeon, the search skill reacts, so I stop and head back to where I got the reaction. It seems the skill has found a gathering point.

– Hihirokane rank 10

A metal with the highest ranking hardness in the world.

Hihirokane huh, I know its name only from novels and games, so it's my first time seeing the real thing. As you'd expect from the legendary metal, even I, who is ignorant of these things, understand that it's producing a mysterious aura. However, Hihirokane on Earth is just a myth. Whether Hihirokane of this world is the same, I have no idea.

I can't make anything from just one ore, but if I manage to gather more, I will make a set of armor out of this.

I'm certain that if I make armor out of this, it would block any kind of attack. Since I've finished gathering what I can, I leave this place in a hurry in order to shake off the pursuing snakes.

After that, I finished the exploration of the second floor in about 30 minutes. Unfortunately, I didn't have any new discoveries.

I'm now descending to the third floor.

As I advance towards the area even further underground, the heat is increasing steadily.

I take a look at the third floor, but there doesn't seem to be any particular change from the other floors.

However, this is a dungeon of the highest ranking. I can't be careless.

After walking for a while, I got a reaction from the Detection skill.

Three Red Dragons.

Because it seems that they haven't noticed me yet, I make a surprise attack.

I take down the one that was further away from the other two, and while I still have the momentum from the attack, I lop off the head of the second one from behind.

I was finally noticed by the last one and it opened its mouth to attack, but it was already too late.

「Kūjin」

A slash attack flies towards the dragon's neck.

The subjugation of the three Red Dragons was over in a few seconds.

Un, as expected of a rank 10 sword, it's easy to use.

I'd be able to finish the troll in one blow if I had this sword.

When I had finished placing the carcasses of the Red Dragons into my item box, the Detection skill reacts again.

There's a large number of enemies. Maybe about 20 altogether?
Because these are small fries, they should just let me pass.
It can't be helped, let's exterminate the enemy before exploring.
「Treasure chest spotted」

After slaughtering hundreds of Red Dragons, I feel a little satisfied. I've found a treasure chest.

– Communication Talisman rank 10
Contact can be made at any time with another person holding the same talisman.

Inside, there were two Communication Talismans. I already have these things though.

The only difference between the two is that the Communication Talisman I got from Maria is rank 8 while these are rank 10.

Come to think of it, the Talisman I got from Maria doesn't work here. If the dungeon is a higher rank than the talisman, will it not work?

Maa, I'll make sure of it later while I also confirm yesterday's phenomenon.
I leave the Communication Talisman in the treasure chest and place the entire chest into the item box.

– Treasure chest containing Communication Talisman

The description in the item box is similar to the one with the Curry Roux. I remove the treasure chest from the item box, but there's only one Talisman inside... Ara, I don't get this.

Perhaps because 2 Talismans make a set, putting in just 1 is useless?

I empty the treasure chest and put it back into the item box.

– An empty Treasure chest

Somehow the treasure chest is now empty. It seems it will never fill up again.
Well, that didn't go very well.

An empty treasure chest may be useful later on though, so I leave it like that in the item box.

The Detection skill reacts again.

Red Dragons again, are there only Red Dragons on this floor?

I think my hunch was correct.
The number of Red Dragons that I killed before I finished exploring the third floor

exceeded 300. Since the battle was basically over with just a single blow, I'm bored. Are there any stronger enemies here?

Moreover, there are no reactions from Search.

I'm slightly mentally tired, so I will end today's exploration with this.

I hope tomorrow will be better...

When I make it back to the surface, the first thing I notice is that there are two men eating the remaining Curry by the side of the carriage.

Those were the leftovers from today's lunch.

So why are they eating my curry?

「Wai, wait a second Maika-san! These people are not bad people!」

When I approached the men, Mira hugs me from behind and desperately tries to stop me.

「Please put away your sword!」

I notice that I seem to have unconsciously unsheathed my katana. Dangerous, dangerous, I was about to kill these people in front of Mira. If I did that, I would be hated.

Let's calm down, I'll kill them when no one is around to see me.

「You mustn't kill them. These people are not bad」

Are? How did she know? I have pretty bad facial expressions. It's often said that people can't understand what I'm thinking.

While I'm in deep thought, Mira averts her eyes.

Thinking about it, when Maria was talking about the special abilities in the adventurer's guild, Mira had a strange reaction. That confirms it, Mira can read a person's heart. Does Sara have some ability too?

「No, Onee-chan is a normal elf」

「I see」

「Ano... I'm sorry for not telling you. It's creepy isn't it? An ability like this」

「No, not really」

Mira, who usually doesn't express her emotions very often, opens her eyes wide.

Did I say something strange?

I think it's convenient to have an ability like that. It's easy to spot enemies and such thing.

「Ah, it's not like I can read minds. I can only read strong emotions. For some reason, since the last contract we made, I've been able to read Maika-san's heart」

Fumu, that's probably because we exchanged blood through a magic tool during the second slave contract. I don't really know, but I can't think of any other reason.

「Ano, are you really not creeped out by me?」

Mira says with somewhat wet and frightened eyes.
Thinking about it, I've seen scenes in the 2D worlds where the one with mind reading abilities was hated by others.
Does that mean Mira has had such a past?

「Who?」

「Eh?」

「Who's the guy that bullied Mira?」

I will kill him on sight.
To bully Mira is a crime that can only be compensated by death.

「That, that's not good. You can't kill innocent people!」
「It's a crime to bully Mira」
「I have forgiven those people, so killing them is bad」

Mira looks straight into my eyes with a serious look.
After seeing such serious eyes, I have no choice but to withdraw.
However, if anyone tries to harm my girls, I will absolutely kill them. Even if they aren't a criminal, I'll kill them before they can become one. This is the only thing that I can't give up.

「... If possible, I don't want you to kill」
「No, even if I become hated, I won't give up on this. At least until everyone is on the level where none of you can be injured any more, I will absolutely protect everyone by all means」
「... I understand」

I was certain that Mira would be against it, but she nodded rather happily. That's slightly unexpected.

「While I think it would be best if you didn't kill, towards the Maika-san who cares about someone like me even though I have this creepy ability, I'm really happy. The only person who cherishes me this much aside from my own family is you Maika-san」

I think it's a given to care about that which belongs to you.

Maa, well.

Thinking about it, I completely forgot to ask why these men were eating my curry.

When I ask Mira about these men, she tells me that they are residents of a village to the east, Salas. Monsters attacked the village and destroyed their crops. It seems they've had troubles getting food.

So, in order to deal with the monsters, they had gathered what little money the village had and were going to put in a request at the adventurer's guild in the Town of Aranda. They collapsed midway because of hunger though, and the girls who had been hunting monsters had found them. Celica, Charlotte, and Sara, after hearing the circumstances, headed towards the village in order to exterminate the monsters. Mira took care of the two hungry men while waiting for me.

Fortunately, Mira kept it a secret that they were eating curry.

Now, since the three have already headed to the village, I don't have a reason to walk there myself.

「Transfer Crystal?」

「I gave it to Onee-chan」

That's good.

I put the carriage and all the other tools into the item box and take out the Transfer Crystal. I also gave Mira the Communication Talisman that I had found in the dungeon.

I had already taught Mira how to use the Transfer Crystal, so when I put my hand on the crystal, Mira wasn't confused by it.

「Place your hand here. Quickly!」

I urged the two puzzled men to put their hands on the crystal.
When I confirm that everyone's hand is on the crystal, I pour my magic into it.
Then, the scenery distorts around us, and in the next moment...

「Nuo」

「Wow」

「Kya」

We materialized next to the three girls currently walking towards the village.
The three girls were surprised by our sudden appearance, but they soon understood what had happened and started running again.
Looks like they've advanced quite a distance, the village is in sight.

Chapter 18

When we arrived at Salas village, what we saw were tattered houses and ruined fields.

Here and there were villagers with no ambitions.

「Wait here for a moment please, I will go get the Mayor」

The two men run to the inner part of the village.

「Ano...」

After the men left, Celica spoke to me with an apologetic tone.

After hearing the circumstances from the men, Celica said she would help the village, but the men refused at first insisting that it was too dangerous for a little girl. However, because Celica thought the situation would become much worse if the girls weren't able to help, she told the men about my guild rank in order to convince them.

「I'm sorry for talking without permission. My village was also attacked and destroyed by monsters, so I couldn't abandon them no matter what. I will receive any punishment, so please save this village」

「I don't really mind」

「Eh?」

I run my fingers through Celica's hair and rub her ears when she lowered her head to apologize.

Her ears are fluffy. It feels so good. *mofumofu*

「If Celica wants to save them, I don't mind being used as you please. If it's for Celica's sake, I will do anything. Therefore, there's nothing to worry about」

「Maika-san...」

After hearing my words, Celica gradually starts crying.

Wait a minute, why are you crying? Did I say something weird?

I don't know how to handle a crying child, I'm in a pinch.

「Thank you very much...」

Everyone is soothing the sobbing Celica, and after she stopped crying, an old

man with a cane in his hand approached us.

「I'm the mayor of Salas, Freed is the name. That an adventurer-sama of the highest ranking would accept our request, I don't really know how to thank you」
「Don't worry about it. What's the status of the enemy?」

「Thank you very much. The monsters that attacked our village are called Horned Rabbits, they are little monsters that normally live in remote places of the forest. It seems that another monster has settled in the forest, and since the Horned Rabbits lost their source of food, they moved to the village's fields in order to feed. The rest is as you can see」

Fumu, it's troublesome, but it would be better to find and subdue the monster that settled in the forest. As long as that monster is in the forest, putting aside the Horned Rabbits, even more troublesome monsters may appear.

I use Detection at full-throttle and search for the Horned Rabbits.

A little away from the village, there's a group of 40 rabbits.

If I'm not mistaken, a Horned Rabbit is a rank 3 monster based on the requests, but the girls are already beyond rank 3, so they should be able to defeat them without getting hurt.

「You girls will go to the east and subdue the group of the Horned rabbits. While you do that, I will defeat the monster in the forest」

「I got it」

「Leave it to us」

「I will do my best」

「Ma, leave it to this lady. The annihilation of a few rabbits is an easy task」

They didn't request the subjugation of the monster in the forest, but when I think about the future, it's better to subdue it, so I decided to kill it just in case.

「Wait a minute!」

When I was about to leave, an evil-looking man emerged from the crowd of villagers.

I have a premonition that something troublesome will happen.

「I'm sorry, but I can't trust you」

「Oi, you, go back...」

「Shut up!! You old fart, stay silent!!」

That man knocked down the mayor, who tried to stop him, and stands before me.

As I expected, it turned out to be a troublesome development, so a wrinkle appears on my [glabella](#) unintentionally. I put a hand on my katana, but that hand is gently held by Mira, so I reluctantly decide to listen to the man.

「First of all, this small and weak looking woman can't be a rank 10 adventurer. My guess is that this woman is a con artist」

From the man's speech, the villagers started to whisper amongst themselves. Maa, certainly from the way I look no one would be able to tell that I'm a rank 10 adventurer.

Even I would certainly doubt someone who looks like a young girl, unless she is from a different race.

It's inevitable, but I can't leave like this, so I will just shut up this annoying fellow.

「Then-「I will take this with me」」

He looked like he still wanted to say something, but I grab the man and sprint full speed into the forest.

The man couldn't withstand the speed I ran at, and was unconscious in just a minute.

Although the drag will increase and this guy could die, I don't care.

...No, the four who know my strength will realize that I killed this man on purpose. I won't let you die, because I don't want to become disliked.

Then, I'll drop him off somewhere along the way and pick him up on the way back... Is he coming to?

「Fuge!?!」

The man is regaining consciousness, so I drop him on the ground. After I inspect the forest with Detection, I found a few Behemoths. I couldn't sense any other monsters, so I guess they were all eaten by the Behemoths. Still, where did these Behemoths come from?

「Oi, what the hell are you doing!」

I ignore the man behind me. I just want to end this quickly and go home. In this forest various mushrooms and medicinal herbs grow, but because I want to quickly return, I decided to ignore them.

The man should be waiting where I left him, but he's following me for some reason.

「You're in the way. Go somewhere else」

「Don't joke around! You forcefully brought me here, so you better protect me!」

You little shit, first you accuse me of being a con artist and now you want me to protect you? This is troublesome, should I kill him after all?

「Oi, listen 「Be quiet」」

Because we are approaching the Behemoths, I shut the man up with a light fist to his stomach.

Maa, there wasn't a meaning to doing that, the nearest Behemoth has already noticed me. However, I hit him because he was annoying.

The Behemoth began to move, so I draw my katana and run.

「Buoooo!!」

The roar of the Behemoth echoes throughout the forest, and the remaining Behemoths turn on me simultaneously.

However, it was already too late for them.

「Sei」

I decapitate the Behemoth that roared first.

「Sora kiba」

Next, I cut through the two Behemoths that were closest to each other. I stopped the last Behemoth that rushed at me with one hand, and I pierce its neck with the katana. The subjugation is done.

Its body was larger than the Red Dragon's, but the fire-breathing dragon was stronger.

Nonetheless, both monsters die from a single blow.

「Incredible, A Behemoth is a rank 8 monster. To slay 4 of them at once...」

Rank 8 huh, I wonder what such high ranked monsters are doing near the village?

Will even stronger monsters emerge from their territories?

... That is a possible development. I think I can see a future where I'll have to hunt them down.

Maa, putting that aside, I'm looking forward to fighting strong enemies. In fact, it may be quite a fun development.

「Ano, can I get a minute of your time」

When thinking such, the man, with his body lowered, spoke.

Until a while ago, his attitude was so different. Honestly, it feels disgusting.

「What」

「I'm really sorry for my cocky attitude earlier!」

The man performed a wonderful [dogeza](#).

This world also knows about dogeza, huh. Even though this should be a fantasy world, why do I feel like it's influenced by Japanese culture.

《IDO》 is a game developed in Japan, so I wonder if it will develop into a normal Japanese culture in a millennium.

「Don't worry about it」

I mean, I don't really need an apology. I have no interest in this fellow.

I put the Behemoth corpses into the item box.

「I'm returning」

「Ei, I will accompany you!」

After cleaning out the Behemoths, I don't have any reason to stay.

I grab the man's collar and run at full speed through the forest. He fainted again.

I use Detection on the way back and confirm how many of the Horned Rabbits are left. There are only about 5 rabbits remaining.

I intended to help the girls if they had taken their time, but it looks their fight will be over soon.

Let's return to the village.

「...」

With a stunned expression, the villagers verify the pile of Behemoth corpses.

I called over Maria, who is at her wit's end.

The reason I called Maria is simple. The village can't afford to pay for the corpses.

「How much for these Behemoths?」

「Wait a minute, what are Behemoths doing in a place like this?」

「Don't know」

I will be troubled if you ask me.

Rather, I want to know.

「Usually, monsters of this rank are usually only found in dungeons. This isn't something an ordinary person will see everyday. They sometimes appear in a group, but this is the first time I heard about them being so close to a village」

「Doesn't matter. Also, there's this」

I take out the Red Dragon and fire-breathing flowers.

「... I'm sorry. I've seen the fire flower once before, but I have never seen that dragon monster」

「They're monsters from a rank 10 dungeon」

「Boss? Or middle class boss?」

「Small fry」

「You're the only one who calls monsters from a rank 10 dungeon small fry」

The expression on Maria's face became incredible.

Maa, if she never saw it than there's no helping it. That dungeon is not something a person could enter.

「How many do you have?」

「468 Fire Flowers, 312 Red Dragons」

I intended to keep a few for myself, but since I'll be diving into the dungeon again tomorrow, I'll hand over everything.

「... Wait a minute, I will have to consult with the guild first. Let me take one with me」

「Roger」

Maria looks tired for some reason and left somewhere with the Transfer Crystal.

The Mayor asked me to spend the night in the village.

The villagers, whose trouble with the Horned Rabbits was resolved, welcomed us with warm smiles.

At the banquet held in the evening, the weird man told the over-dramatized story of me fighting the Behemoths. Everyone's excitement rose.

The food at the banquet wasn't very tasty, so I was eating my Curry. Because the villagers were interested in it, Mira, Sara, and Celica, treated the villagers to some. It was very popular.

As a result, I somehow ended up being called the hero of the village.

I tried to explain to them that I do not want to be known as a hero, so I at least told them to not to disclose any information about me, just in case. I can't expect much from the looks on the villagers faces though.

I feel like every action I take leads to trouble, is it just my imagination?

Maria returned late in the night.

「Sorry for the wait. I will buy everything for 31,980 gold coins. However, the next time I buy the same things, I will pay less」

A fairly large amount. Is this a normal price for rank 10 monsters?
If I'm to hunt more of these high ranked monsters, will the guild treasury be okay?

「Understood」

I hand over my guild card and Maria completes the transaction.
I remove the corpses from the item box, and together we put them into the item bag without a capacity restriction.

After we're finished, Maria leaves. It seems the top dog of the guild is very busy.

「Ano, Maika-san, I have a small request」

After Maria left, Celica spoke to me.
While I'm capturing the dungeon, Celica recommended making this village our base.

Looks like she wants to help in the rebuilding of the village.

I have no reason to decline, so I accept her proposal.

Since there isn't anyone in this village that can harm the girls, I don't see the problem.

「Thank you very much!」

When I saw Celica and her wagging tail, I became happy.
Okay, to make Celica even happier, after I return from the dungeon tomorrow,

I'll help with the reconstruction.

Chapter 19

「Waa」

A Red Dragon's head flies in the air.

The area is filled with the corpses of various demons as there is not a place to stand anymore.

I started my exploration at the third floor, currently I'm at the sixth floor.

「There's too many」

I don't stop my movement while muttering and send several monsters heads in the air.

Certainly there were a lot of monsters on the floors I cleared before.

However, the caves were vast and there was no place to rest.

But from the fourth floor the caves became extremely small and I found stairway to next floor quickly, the number of monsters further increased, it's hard to find a place without any monsters, the place is filled from start to stairs with monsters.

Because of that, I can't rest until I annihilate all the monsters.

The monsters attack each other while I dodge their attacks, so they make it somehow easier.

The monsters in the dungeon are different from the monsters outside, they don't fight monsters of different species.

Most likely the monsters from dungeon and monsters from outside are totally different.

「Well, thinking about won't help」

I cut the attacking Flame Bird down.

With this, all the monsters on this floor are dead.

Monsters that resist physical attacks did not show up since the fourth floor. Because this floor is only about 1 kilometer wide and has only one room, the exploration is easy.

Since I cut the monsters on the floor one by one, I'm quite tired.

Also, there are no treasure chests nor collection points, it doesn't feel like

dungeon at all.

Where does this dungeon end? At the very least spawn stronger monsters so I could have some fun.

I already want to return, but it's still a day time so I will stay little longer.
When I go down the stairs, I see the same door I saw when I battled the troll.
Finally the boss, took long enough.

When I open the door and see the monster, I frown unconsciously.
A huge stature of five meters.
Three heads in one body.
It is a beast from the legends on Earth, the hound of hell.

「Cerberus」

Its name flows from my mouth naturally.
The moment I'm saying its name, all three heads direct their vision towards me.
When I saw their eyes, a pressure stronger than the Troll's weighs on my body.
The corner of my mouth rises instinctively.

「Hou, you don't fall on your knees after seeing our appearance」
「It has been over thousand years since that happened」
「We may enjoy this」

After seeing me, each head gave a happy speech.

「The monster talked?」
「Don't lump us together with that fellow with empty brain」
「We are one of the thirteen monsters created by the Evil God」
「Amongst us only that stupid troll can't talk」

Each head answers my question.
Apparently the troll I fought and this guy is different from ordinary monsters.
Still, an Evil God... Is that fellow responsible for all the abnormal occurrences?
Maa, it does not concern me.
Now I will simply enjoy this fight.

I draw the katana and assume a posture.

「Hou」
「This will be」

「Quite enjoyable」

「Narukami」

Slashing at the speed of light and cutting through the chest of Cerberus.
The blood flies out of the cut.

... No, this is not a blood, monsters don't have blood.

This Cerberus is the same special existence as the Troll was.

Then, what is that?

I don't know. However, I have somewhat bad feeling about this.

I kick the ground before the liquid touches my body and with a back step I get away.

「The Scorching」

「Flash of light」

「Receive it!」

A beam of heat is shot at me, I dodge it by jumping in the air.

Furthermore, a second beam flies towards me.

I kick the ground and jump in the air again, after dodging a third beam flies towards me, I jump further in the air.

When I hit the ceiling, I push-off and assault the Cerberus head.

「Narukami」

With the momentum intact I charge and cut off the head on the right.

From the neck, a liquid spurts.

I don't want to touch it, so I get away from the Cerberus.

The ground that the liquid touched melts.

Is that a poison? No, it may be an acid.

I don't know its nature, but touching that liquid seems like a bad idea.

「Fumu, you were able to cut off our head」

「The last time we suffered such wound was from the Hero a thousand years ago」

Even though the head was cut off, the remaining two heads are having a pleasant conversation.

It's almost like, a wound of this degree is not enough for it to care.

I understood why immediately.

An upsurge of meat flew from the neck section, after a few seconds a new head grown.

「Be careful, that sword has some powerful curse」

「Hou, I thought the recovery was slow, is that the reason?」

「A curse that works against us, we should be more careful」

「However, I think it will be difficult to dodge the attacks of that speedy lass」

「Without a doubt. Then, there's only one thing to do」

「To attack without giving her chance to counter」

With these words, the body of Cerberus blackens and rushes at me with unimaginable speed.

A dodge it to the side.

「Ha」

「You avoided that?」

「Try to dodge this!」

A fire came out of the Cerberus body it expands, takes an appearance of snake and it's headed my way.

I dodge by jumping over it.

Cerberus charges at me again.

The amount of flames surrounding the Cerberus has changed, there's more. It spreads forming a wall of flames.

No matter how I look at it, it is impossible to dodge.

Then — —

「Reppū-ha」

— — I just need to break through the flames.

I thrust my katana and the wind flies towards the flames.

From that wind a tornado forms and drills a hole in the wall of flames.

「「「What!?!」」」

I kick the ground and jump behind the Cerberus through the hole in the wall of flames, Cerberus let's out a surprised shriek.

「Kūjin」

While in the air I slash at the neck of the middle head.

「Flame」

I use my polished magic and a scorching beam of flame is released from the ground towards Cerberus' body.

It is possible to level up the magic skills, so I took my time and leveled up some low-grade magic skills.

The power is lower compared to higher grade spells, but it's insignificant for me. I sealed the wound after cutting the head off, it would be nice if it worked, but the reality doesn't seem to be so sweet.

The hole in the body I opened with the Flame, closed in no time and a new head grows from the neck.

All wounds were recovered in few seconds.

「Heat Blast」

However, I didn't just shut up and watched.

I activated advanced fire magic.

Three huge magic squares appeared in front of me.

From the squares, three huge fireballs were shot.

「Don't underestimate us」

「Lass」

「That magic won't work on us!」

Each head released heat from their mouths, it collides with my magic.

The power is fifty-fifty, It clashes somewhere in the middle between Cerberus and me.

However, the rivalry won't last long. The Cerberus' heat doesn't fall, while my flames are becoming smaller.

If this continues, it's definitely going to be pushed back.

I don't have the slightest intention of letting that happen though.

「Kūjin」

I move besides Cerberus and cut off one head.

Although preferably I would like to cut off all heads at once, but the skills have an interval of few seconds before it can be used again.

However, cutting off one is sufficient.

One of the three fireballs overwhelmed the Cerberus' beams and hits its body.

The impact carbonized half of the Cerberus' body.

Only one head remains.

The plan is to cut off the remaining head before the recovery starts.

But the Cerberus won't go down without a fight.

The last head takes a breath and fires a beam towards me.

I can't avoid it. The recovery has already started.

I don't have time to dodge.

I can only hold on.

「Reppū-ha」

I use wind and counter the beam.

In an instant a tornado forms from the katana.

In a few seconds, the wind broke through the heat.

In the meantime, I use the opening to pass under the heat.

The beam that was aimed at me passed without touching me.

「Impossible!?!」

The last Cerberus' head had surprised look, I calmly cut the last head.

With this, I cut off all the heads.

It would be nice if it ended with that...

「...」

I watch the Cerberus' body as it recovers, I frown unconsciously.

I wonder how does this fellow dies?

I thought that maybe if all three heads were cut off it may die, but as I watch the Cerberus who is not dead yet, I'm in deep thought on how to kill it.

「This might work?」

I put away the katana in item box in order to focus on magic.

I'm preparing to cast the highest-grade fire magic.

When I read the description of the spell, the range is vast and the power so tremendous, that if possible I didn't want to use it.

When used indoor, the damage will be so enormous that it will certainly hit me too.

It will probably vanquish my body.

However, if it vanishes my own body, it will definitely kill the Cerberus.
Because I can't come up with other method, this is the only way.
If it doesn't defeat it... Well, at that time I will just keep cutting it until I become bored.

The problem is to cast before the Cerberus starts moving. If hope I have enough time to cast it before it starts moving. The damage Cerberus received this time should be enough.

「Damn you!」
「Lass!」
「We will erase you!」

Cerberus finished its recovery, it comes charging angry with black flames covering its body.
However, it's too late.

「This is the end. Explosion」
While activating the magic, I take out the Troll's club and use it as a shield.
「What!?!」
「Impossible!?!」
「That incantation!」
Immediately after, along with flash of light the space burst open.

「oooh」
A huge explosion engulfs the room along with myself.
Although I used the club as a shield, it didn't prevent all.
My hands and feet are getting charred.
I grit my teeth and try to endure the pain.
Several minutes or tens of minutes. Actually only several seconds passed, while the flames burned my body, it felt like the time has stopped.
The explosion flame is soon settled. I don't know if it's possible to recover once your body is completely erased.
The body became unsupportable and I fall down at the place. I frown at this pain.
Simultaneously with my fall, the troll's club that became charcoal, can no longer keep its shape and crumbles.

Since it became damaged so bad, it can't be probably repaired anymore. The club was very convenient, it's a little regrettable.

What happened to Cerberus? I want to move my head to check, but my body is not responding.

But, because the room is surrounded by light, I most likely defeated it.

Aa, that was fun...

Because of the intense pain and huge MP consumption, my consciousness fades.

I meant to take out the Communication Talisman to contact the girls, but my hands didn't grow back yet, so it's impossible to use.

Without being able to get in touch, but satisfied with my battle, I lose consciousness on the spot.

Chapter 20

「xxxxxxxx」

I can hear someone's voice in the darkness.
What is this, I feel like I've experienced this before.
Is it just my imagination?

「xxxxxxxx」

I don't understand what you're saying.
But, this voice is somewhat nostalgic. Do I know owner of this voice?
The area is filled with light.
As the light grows, the voice fades away.
I wanted to at least take a look at the face, but my body doesn't move.

「See you」

I heard such voice at the end.
「Ah, good morning. Maika-san」
「Un, morning」

I wonder for how long was I asleep.
I'm absentminded.
Did I forgot something? If I can't remember, than it probably wasn't important.

I look around, it looks like I'm in a hut in Salas village.
Who carried me? I must give my thanks later.

「This time, you slept for only one day. The one who carried you is Charlotte-chan」

I see, I need to thank Charlotte later.
Still, communicating without words is pretty nice.

「The only ones who think that is my family and you, Maika-san」

Mira laughs after reading my mind.

「I don't think that Celica and Charlotte would mind」
「That's... right. They are gentle girls. But, please wait a little before you tell

them. When I make up my mind, I will tell them myself」

「Yes, don't overdo it」

「Yes」

I intended to pat Mira's head, but my body doesn't move because of pain. Well, after having whole body carbonized that would be natural.

「Carbonized... You did well on surviving」

「I think even if I were to be torn to pieces I would survive. It would hurt though」

Anyway, I could erase the pain if I wished it.

But that way, after suffering serious injury, I would lost reason to move.

「Please rest in bed until the pain disappears just in case at least for today」

「N, I understand」

Mira left to help with the reconstruction of the village.

I'm alone in the hut.

I decided to check everyone's status, because I didn't do it for a long time.

Sara Lv113 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic 《Fire》Lv18
- Magic 《Wind》Lv14
- Magic 《Water》Lv12
- Detection Lv35
- Sword Lv23
- Perception Lv16

Mira Lv111 Talent 9

Skills

- Magic 《Light》Lv20
- Cooking Lv14
- Bow Lv18
- Hawk eyes Lv14
- Appraisal Lv3
- Negotiations Lv2

Celica Lv105 Talent 8

Skills

- Blacksmithing Lv3
- Hammer Lv8
- Evasion Lv12
- Great sword Lv25
- Guard Lv11
- Cooking Lv8

Charlotte Alister Lv114 Talent 10

Skills

- Magic 《Darkness》Lv24
- Flight Lv30
- Automatic recovery Lv5
- Grapple Lv9
- Evasion Lv13
- Magic chanting Lv20
- Claws Lv12

... This is, somehow ridiculous.

This is probably due to the massacre of the dungeon.

The level increased, but the skills didn't grow much.

The reason Charlotte levels faster is because of her talent level?

Umu, to raise their skills levels and combat experience I shouldn't involve myself in fights. However, I want to fight...

Then, should I fight and raise their levels to the extent no one would get injured?

... Un, I would prefer this option.

Well, I will consult this with everyone later.

Still, Charlotte uses the weapon I made her properly.

I didn't expect her to use it when I gave it to her, I'm quite happy.

I will look at my status next.

Name: Maika Lv1000

MP: 1000

STR: 1000

VIT:1000

AGI : 1000

INT : 1000

DEX : 1000

[Skills] Dual wielding Lv100

Detection Lv100

Katana Lv100

Action limit release Lv100

Grapple Lv100

Coercion Lv100

Perception Lv100

Automatic Recovery Lv100

Abnormal State ImmunityLv100

Growth Lv100

Hero Lv—

Gathering Lv100

Cooking Lv100

Search Lv100

Appraisal Lv100

Stealth Lv100

Blacksmithing Lv100

Sewing Lv100

Woodworking Lv100

Alchemy Lv100

Craftsmanship Lv100

Magic 《Fire》Lv100

Tenacity Lv1

Fire resistance Lv1

Fumu, didn't get any strange skills. I got Fire resistance and Tenacity after the fight with Cerberus.

I close the status screen.

What to do, I have nothing to do.

I intended to craft from the monster materials I got in the dungeon, but because there is enough space only to dismantle 1 monster at the time, the present situation is kinda difficult for me.

My body hurts when I move.

Next time, I will fight a way that doesn't require me to destroy my body.
If I get injured it will be my loss,
Think of it, the troll, Cerberus, the possessed armor, why they were so strong?
If I am not mistaken, Cerberus and Troll were one of the 13 soldiers of the Evil God. I feel like that's what he said.
If that's the case, then I'm looking forward to meeting next 11 soldiers. No, if I include the armor 10?
However, I feel like the armor was something different...

「I quit」

I wouldn't know even if I think about it, I close my eyes.
To begin with, I don't need to know if the enemy is evil or not.
I just need to know how to defeat it. That's all.
After I closed my eyes, I slowly start to fall asleep.
That's good, I don't have anything to do, it would be nice to fall asleep just like this.

I suddenly wake up.
It looks like I slept for a while, it's pitch-black in the hut, I don't hear anything aside from the girls sleeping.
I use stealth to not wake up anyone and go outside of the hut.
The pain almost disappeared.
I will not have any problems moving around normally.
I think the whole village is asleep, the night is tranquil.
The only thing I hear is dog's howling somewhere far away.

「Ano...」

「N?」

When I came out of the hut to do some light exercise, Sara called to me.
Ah, Sara's Detection skill leveled up significantly.
It's natural for her to detect this presence.

「Are you going somewhere? I felt some nasty presence, so I woke up」
「Uh...」

Now, what should I do?
At this rate, it seems Sara can't understand what this enemy is.
To be honest, I don't want Sara to follow me.
The enemy goes in this direction, they are large in numbers, but the enemy isn't of the level that would hurt Sara.
But the type of opponent is the problem.

「It would be better for you to go sleep. I will take care of it」
「Are the monsters coming here?」
「No, bandits」
「I will go too!」

After hearing about the opponent, Sara answered immediately with angry tone.
... Was it bad that I answered honestly?
Sara's and Mira's parents were killed by the bandits. It's natural they want to take revenge with their own hands.

「No, it's better if you would go to sleep」
「No, please let me go with you!」
「Are you going to kill humans? I don't know what to do with them if you keep them alive」
「... It's alright. I will do it」

I thought with that she would back off, this is quite unexpected.
Her body trembles with fear, after hearing she would need to kill them. However, she looks firmly in my eyes with determination.
After seeing her eyes I can't refuse.
Even if I had refused, she would probably follow me selfishly.

「I understand. However, you will properly listen to me」
「Yes, thank you very much!」

If possible I wanted to avoid killing a human before the girls, but I certainly didn't want them to become murderers themselves. Well, can't be helped.
Sara bowed once and went inside the hut to get her equipment.

「Haa...」

When I think about it again, I leak a big sigh.

I wish to protect everyone, a gentle 12 years old girl is going to kill a person, it's impossible to be calm.

In the other words, after beating the bandits, I must take care of Sara's mental health...

That's my weak point though...

It's better to not allow Sara to do anything, should I kill them in one blow? Un, I will do that.

「I'm sorry to keep you waiting」

「Then, let's go」

「Yes」

Sara who prepared, left the hut without waking up anyone.

As usual she's nervous, in the meantime, the bandits had gotten near, there's no time to take it slow.

Me and Sara quietly left the village.

「There」

I detected bunch of bandits about 300 meters ahead. About 70 people in total. Quite a lot.

I get behind the bandits quietly.

Because both of us have a Stealth skill, the bandits didn't notice most of the attacks.

I hold Sara's hand, because she is still nervous, I feel my hand getting wet from her sweat.

「Are you okay?」

「Yes. They are the bandits that attacked us. There's no doubt. It's revenge for papa and mama. I will absolutely kill them」

When we found the bandits, Sara's eyes were glaring, but her body trembling. I grasp her hand to reassure her a little, she calmed a little, the trembling slowly subsides as I can't feel it anymore in the hands.

But, seeing her like this, I don't want her to become murderer even if it's to take a revenge for her parents.

I tell Sara the strategy.

Even if I say strategy, it's only defeating the guys that survived my magic attack. It will end our most silent assassin skill, once attacking the Stealth will be turned off, because I can't use it again until I get out of line of sight, I can't use this skill again.

I also tell Sara to use only magic, not her sword.

Rather to cut them directly with sword, using magic to kill people may lower the feeling of guilt.

However I plan to finish it all by myself.

Sara nods quietly to my strategy.

Verifying that, I conjure magic power to use magic.

The fire magic I'm going to use is second in area damage only to Explosion.

「Inferno」

A giant wave of lava appears in front of me, the bandits who were celebrating at the moment were swallowed instantly.

The bandits were unaware of the wave until the end, even bones are not left behind, aside from one bandit everyone else completely disappeared from this world.

The last remaining bandit, was a bandit who still could be called a young boy, the instant I cast magic, he turned his back by a chance, saw the wave of lava and run away, so he somehow survived.

That being said, his lower part of the body has touched the lava, he will probably die in a moment.

But, if I keep him alive without killing him, I don't know what could happen if I leave him here, so I deliver the killing blow. I don't know what could happen because of the Hero skill, so I carefully burn the corpse. There is a chance he could be revived from the dead.

「Let's go home」

I confirm that the bandit is dealt with and look back at Sara.

Something is wrong. Sara won't look me in the eye, her body is shaking. After all, it becomes like this?

「Maika-san is...」

「N?」

「Don't you feel bad to kill people?」

「...」

I get tense after hearing Sara's question.

To be honest, I don't feel anything at all.

However, if I answer honestly, I don't what how will Sara look at me from now on.

That said, even if I lie, it won't be convincing at all, since I killed them without hesitation.

「...No」

「Is that so...」

As a result of being at loss, I answered honestly.

If possible I don't want to lie to the girls, there's no way to deceive them.

「... I couldn't do it. Even I thought I could take a revenge for papa and mama. However, after I saw the face of the last bandit, I became conscious of killing this person, my body suddenly stopped working. Even though these bandits were papa's and mama's enemy! Even I though I would kill them all! Even though... I...」

After saying that, Sara couldn't stand anymore, I caught her sobbing while she was falling down.

I who don't have any feelings while killing people can't understand how Sara feels at the moment.

But, Sara is crying now and I don't know what to say.

「...」

Once I try to say something, my mouth immediately closes.

I can't think of words of comfort. What should I say at times like these.

It was failure. If I knew things became like this, I wouldn't take Sara with me. I bite my lip unconsciously while thinking of how worthless I am.

「It's alright. Just let me handle all the painful things」

After all, this was what I came up after thinking desperately, Sara cried until she fell asleep, it was possible to hug the body of young girl to comfort her, but I

couldn't do it.